THE FANTASTIC FOUR®

MARVEL MASTERWORKS®

BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

MARVEL VOL. 2

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
11 FEB.
What's going on here? Why is the Fantastic Four backing away helplessly from... "The Impossible Man"?
Don't miss this great Off-Beat Collectors' Item issue!
Also: You requested... A Day with the Fantastic Four!
Featuring never-before-revealed facts about the F.F.'s past and present!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
13 APR.
Mystery on the Moon!!!
More than two-hundred thousand miles from earth, the Fantastic Four face the menace of... "The Red Ghost!"
Also, in this spellbinding tale you will meet the most dramatic being of all time! The mysterious Watcher!
Who is he? What is he? Is he?

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
14 MAY
How much action, how much drama do you crave? For be on hand when... The Sub-Mariner strikes!
At last we meet again! But this time... on my terms!
Undersea monarch versus America's greatest super-heroes! Plus the surprise return of another former villain!

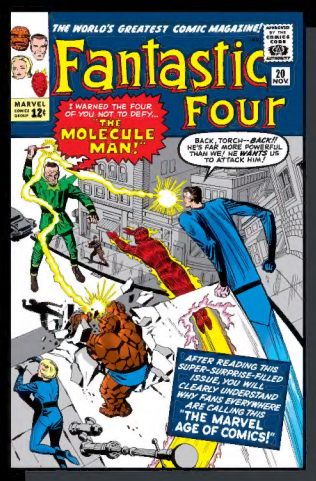
THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
15 JUNE
Featuring... "The Mad Thinker and his Awesome Androids!"
Let none of the Fantastic Four leave alive! The Thinker commands it!
Not only has the mad Thinker taken over the Fantastic Four's headquarters, but he's beating them at their own game!
Me—he's turning our own weapons against us! We haven't a chance!
Just wait! Sooner or later... I'll get my mitts on you! Just wait!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
16 JULY
Special surprise guest star! Ant-Man
The Return of Doctor Doom! The world's most amazing super-villain!!
Visit the mysterious micro-world of Doctor Doom!!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
18 SEPT.
He has all the powers of the Fantastic Four plus still more! How can they defeat...
The All-Powerful Super-Skrull!

ANNUAL
72 BIG PAGES
Fantastic Four Annual
#1 1963
"The Undersea Legions of Sub-Mariner!"
At last! Sub-Mariner finds his long-lost race!
And so begins the most fantastic battle of all time!
Inside the pages of this, the world's greatest comic magazine!
Spider-Man waits within these pages!
Also: The origin of the Fantastic Four! The most requested saga ever printed!
Page after page of the gallery of villains!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
19 OCT.
"At the Mercy of Rama-Tut" the Pharoah from the Future!
I never thought it could happen! Rama-Tut's ray gun has made helpless slaves of the Fantastic Four!
There, Susan Storm! There is what happens to those who defy me—no matter what powers they possess!


THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
The Fantastic Four
20 NOV
I warned the Four of you not to defy... the Molecule Man!
Back, Torch—back!! He's far more powerful than we! He wants us to attack him?
After reading this super-surprise-filled issue, you will clearly understand why fans everywhere are calling this "The Marvel Age of Comics!"

The Marvel Masterworks proudly present the world's most famous comics and super heroes from their very beginnings in a series of painstakingly restored archival volumes.

MARVEL

Collecting *The Fantastic Four* #11-20 & *Annual* #1

THE FANTASTIC FOUR®

MARVEL MASTERWORKS®

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MARVEL VOL 2

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

12¢

THE Fantastic Four

MC

11 FEB.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHY IS THE FANTASTIC FOUR BACKING AWAY HELPLESSLY FROM... "THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN" ????

DON'T MISS THIS GREAT OFF-BEAT COLLECTORS' ITEM ISSUE!

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THE STORY YOU REQUESTED! "A DAY WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR!"

FEATURING NEVER-BEFORE-REVEALED FACTS ABOUT THE F.F.'s PAST AND PRESENT!

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SPECIAL BONUS TO OUR READERS!
Presenting: THE TYPE OF STORY MOST REQUESTED BY YOUR LETTERS AND POST CARDS...
A VISIT WITH the FANTASTIC FOUR
SAY, FELLA, WHAT'S EVERYONE STANDIN' ON LINE FOR?
GET WITH IT, PEANUT! THIS IS THE DAY THE NEW FANTASTIC FOUR COMES OUT!
HEY! COME ON-- KEEP THAT LINE MOVIN'!
HMMM, LOOKS AS THOUGH WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT OUR TURN TO GET THE LATEST ISSUE!
OH, LET'S JUST COME BACK LATER, REED!
I TOLD YA WE SHOULDA GOTTEN HERE SOONER!
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? WE KNOW HOW THE STORIES END!
FANTASTIC FAN PAGE
HEY, CHARLIE, LOOK! I JUST GOT THE LATEST COPY! AND MY LETTER'S ON THE FAN PAGE!
SCRIPT: STAN LEE • ART: JACK KIRBY • INKING: DICK AYERS • LETTERING: ART SIMEK
X-72
1

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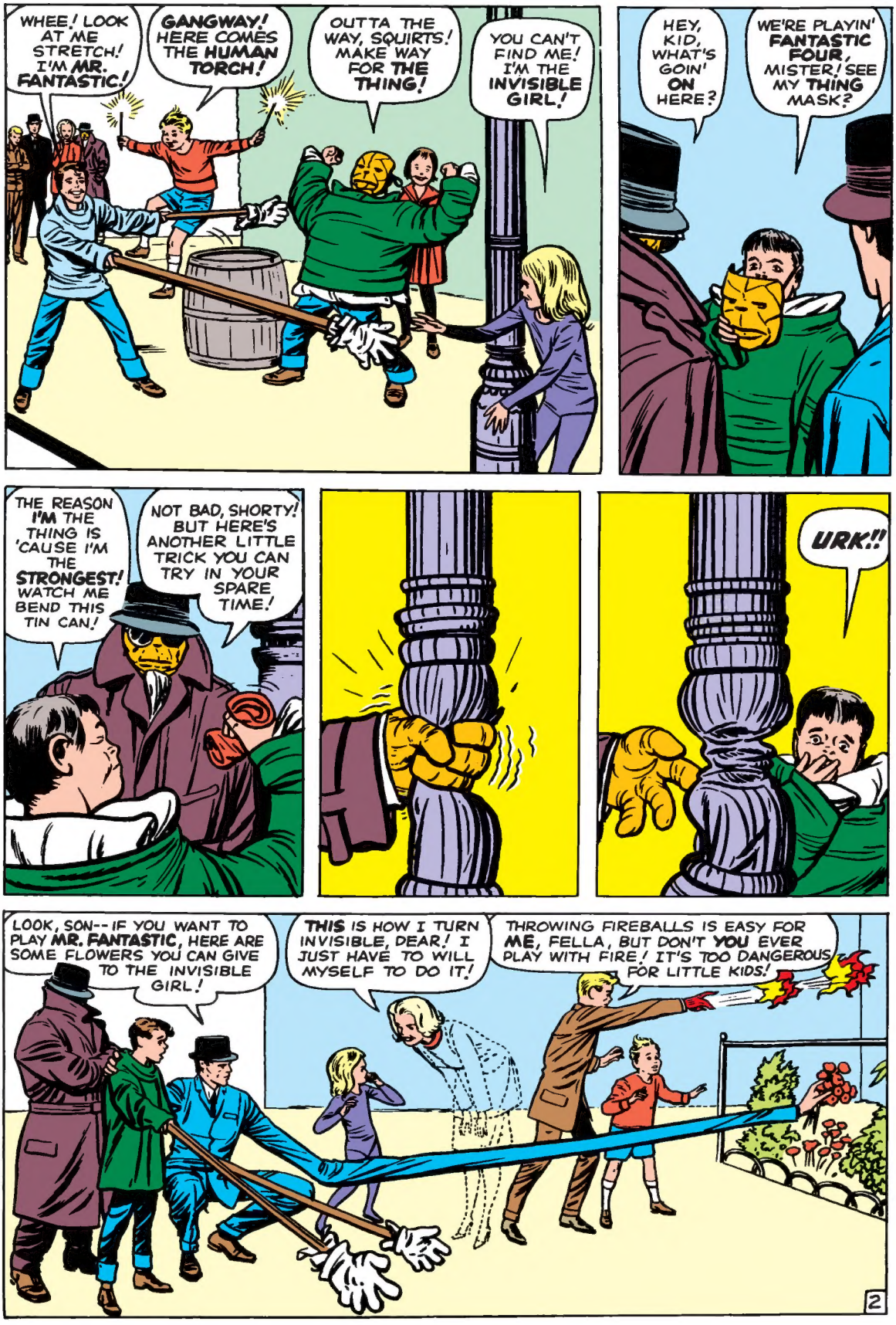
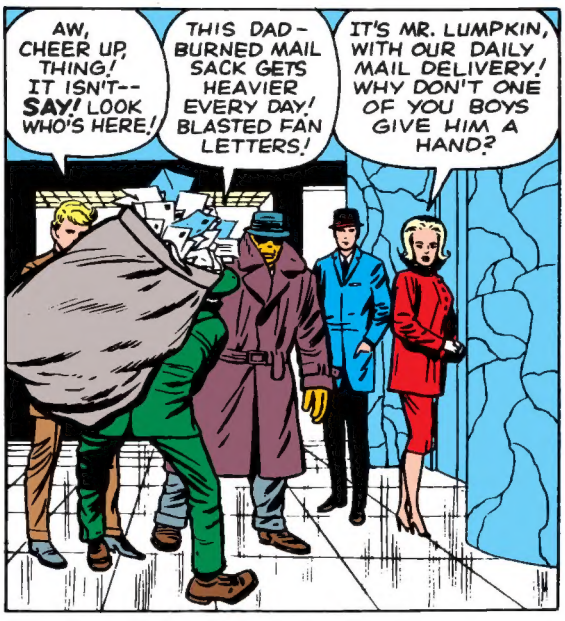
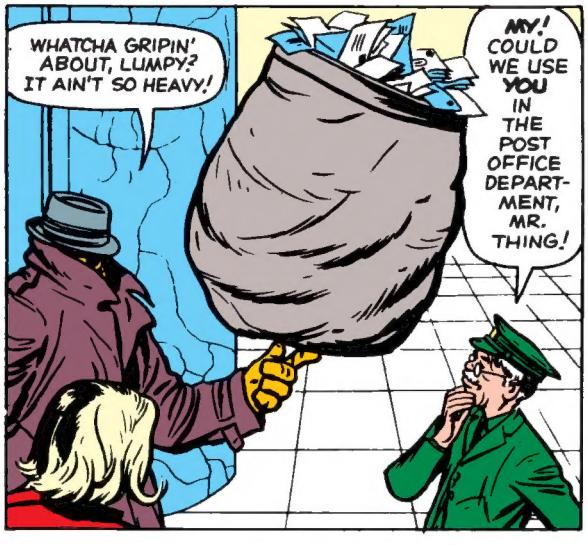
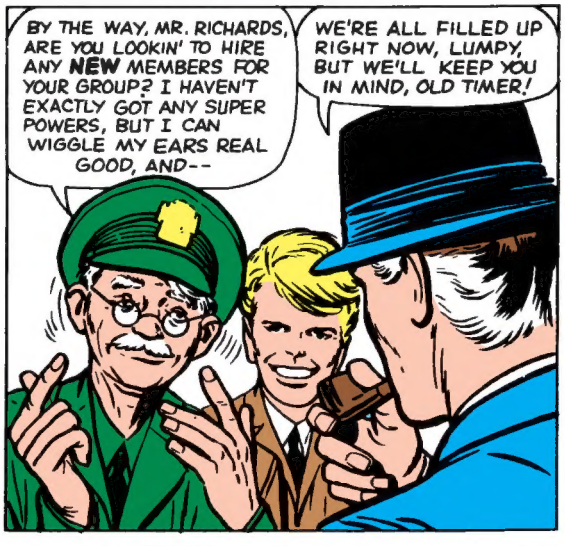

WHEE! LOOK AT ME STRETCH! I'M MR. FANTASTIC!
GANGWAY! HERE COMES THE HUMAN TORCH!
OUTTA THE WAY, SQUIRTS! MAKE WAY FOR THE THING!
YOU CAN'T FIND ME! I'M THE INVISIBLE GIRL!
HEY, KID, WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?
WE'RE PLAYIN' FANTASTIC FOUR, MISTER! SEE MY THING MASK?
THE REASON I'M THE THING IS 'CAUSE I'M THE STRONGEST! WATCH ME BEND THIS TIN CAN!
NOT BAD, SHORTY! BUT HERE'S ANOTHER LITTLE TRICK YOU CAN TRY IN YOUR SPARE TIME!
URK!!
LOOK, SON--IF YOU WANT TO PLAY MR. FANTASTIC, HERE ARE SOME FLOWERS YOU CAN GIVE TO THE INVISIBLE GIRL!
THIS IS HOW I TURN INVISIBLE, DEAR! I JUST HAVE TO WILL MYSELF TO DO IT!
THROWING FIREBALLS IS EASY FOR ME, FELLA, BUT DON'T YOU EVER PLAY WITH FIRE! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS FOR LITTLE KIDS!
2

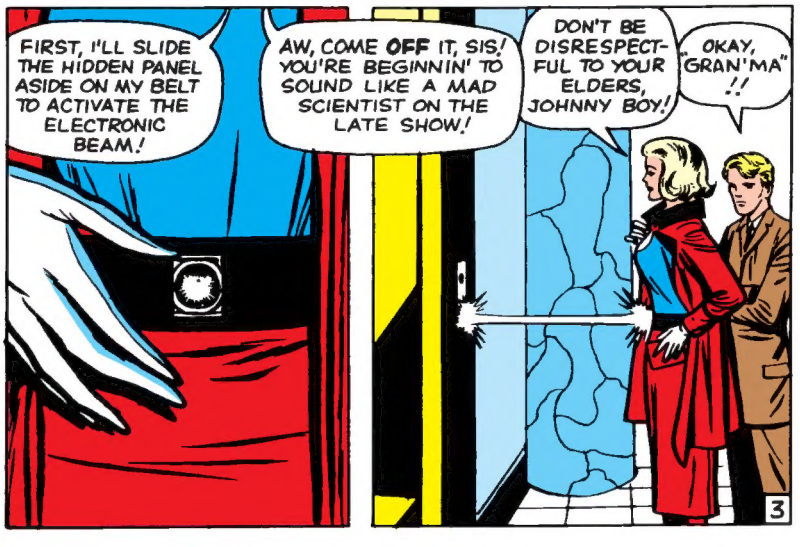
GOSH! DO YOU KNOW WHO THEY WERE?!!
THEY WERE SO CLOSE I COULDA REACHED OUT 'N TOUCHED 'EM!
SO LONG, YOUNGSTERS! IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU!
I GUESS THEY'LL HAVE SOME-THING TO TALK ABOUT FOR A WHILE!
SURE-- THEY'LL TELL HOW THEY MET FOUR FREAKS IN THE STREET!

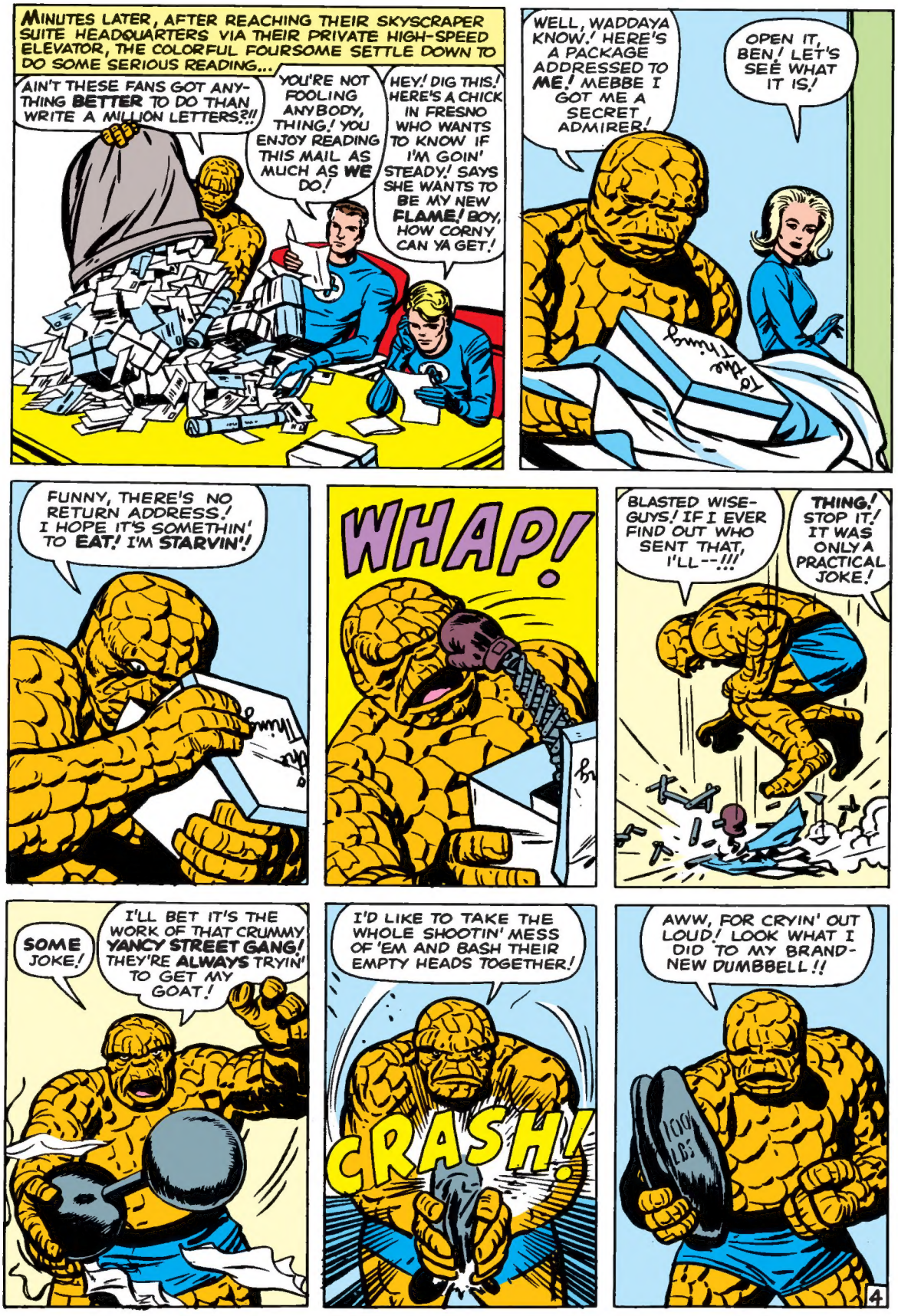

AW, CHEER UP, THING! IT ISN'T-- SAY! LOOK WHO'S HERE!
THIS DAD-BURNED MAIL SACK GETS HEAVIER EVERY DAY! BLASTED FAN LETTERS!
IT'S MR. LUMPKIN, WITH OUR DAILY MAIL DELIVERY! WHY DON'T ONE OF YOU BOYS GIVE HIM A HAND?


WHATCHA GRIPIN' ABOUT, LUMPY? IT AIN'T SO HEAVY!
MY! COULD WE USE YOU IN THE POST OFFICE DEPART-MENT, MR. THING!


BY THE WAY, MR. RICHARDS, ARE YOU LOOKIN' TO HIRE ANY NEW MEMBERS FOR YOUR GROUP? I HAVEN'T EXACTLY GOT ANY SUPER POWERS, BUT I CAN WIGGLE MY EARS REAL GOOD, AND--
WE'RE ALL FILLED UP RIGHT NOW, LUMPY, BUT WE'LL KEEP YOU IN MIND, OLD TIMER!

C'MON, SUE, LET'S OPEN THE ELEVATOR DOOR AND GO UP-STAIRS! IT'S GONNA TAKE FOREVER TO GET THRU ALL THAT FAN MAIL!
DON'T BE IMPATIENT, LITTLE BROTHER! I'VE GOT TO DO THIS BY THE NUMBERS!


FIRST, I'LL SLIDE THE HIDDEN PANEL ASIDE ON MY BELT TO ACTIVATE THE ELECTRONIC BEAM!
AW, COME OFF IT, SIS! YOU'RE BEGINNIN' TO SOUND LIKE A MAD SCIENTIST ON THE LATE SHOW!
DON'T BE DISRESPECT-FUL TO YOUR ELDERS, JOHNNY BOY!
OKAY, GRAN'MA" !!


MINUTES LATER, AFTER REACHING THEIR SKYSCRAPER SUITE HEADQUARTERS VIA THEIR PRIVATE HIGH-SPEED ELEVATOR, THE COLORFUL FOURSOME SETTLE DOWN TO DO SOME SERIOUS READING...
AIN'T THESE FANS GOT ANY-THING BETTER TO DO THAN WRITE A MILLION LETTERS?!!
YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYBODY, THING! YOU ENJOY READING THIS MAIL AS MUCH AS WE DO!
HEY! DIG THIS! HERE'S A CHICK IN FRESNO WHO WANTS TO KNOW IF I'M GOIN' STEADY! SAYS SHE WANTS TO BE MY NEW FLAME! BOY, HOW CORNY CAN YA GET!
WELL, WADDAYA KNOW! HERE'S A PACKAGE ADDRESSED TO ME! MEBBE I GOT ME A SECRET ADMIRER!
OPEN IT, BEN! LET'S SEE WHAT IT IS!
FUNNY, THERE'S NO RETURN ADDRESS! I HOPE IT'S SOMETHIN' TO EAT! I'M STARVIN'!
WHAP!
BLASTED WISE-GUYS! IF I EVER FIND OUT WHO SENT THAT, I'LL--!!!
THING! STOP IT! IT WAS ONLY A PRACTICAL JOKE!
SOME JOKE!
I'LL BET IT'S THE WORK OF THAT CRUMMY YANCY STREET GANG! THEY'RE ALWAYS TRYIN' TO GET MY GOAT!
I'D LIKE TO TAKE THE WHOLE SHOOTIN' MESS OF 'EM AND BASH THEIR EMPTY HEADS TOGETHER!
CRASH!
AWW, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! LOOK WHAT I DID TO MY BRAND-NEW DUMBBELL!!
100 LBS.
4

DON'T BLOW YOUR STACK, OLD PAL! HERE, HOLD OUT YOUR HAND --I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU!
KNOCK IT OFF, REED! I AINT IN THE MOOD TO PLAY GAMES NOW!

IT'S NO GAME, BEN! IT'S THE LATEST VERSION OF A NEW SERUM I'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR YOU!

NUTS! I'M SICK OF BEIN' A GUINEA PIG FOR YOU! NONE OF THESE THINGS EVER WORK RIGHT!
BUT THIS FORMULA IS DIFFERENT, BEN! IT MAY LAST LONGER THAN THE OTHERS!

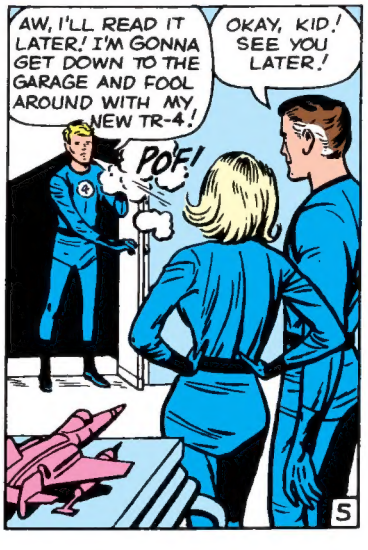
HEY! LOOK HOW FAST IT'S WORKIN'! I-I'M TURNIN' INTO A NORMAL MAN AGAIN! I CAN FEEL IT!

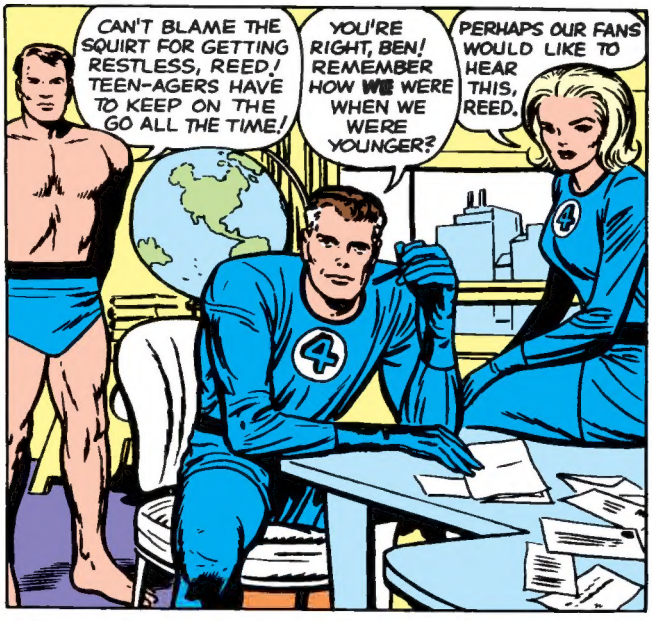
WELCOME BACK TO THE HUMAN RACE, PARTNER!
REED--DO YOU--DO YOU THINK THAT THIS TIME THE CHANGE'LL BE PERMANENT?

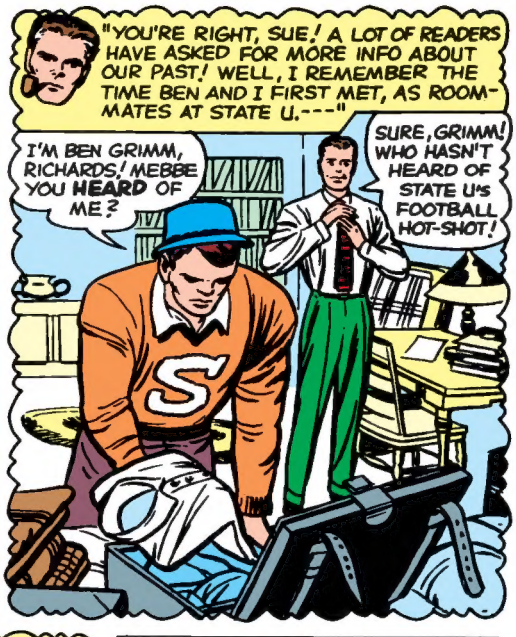
WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE!
OH, BEN, YOU'RE A REAL LIVING DOLL AGAIN! MMMMMM
WHO AM I TO DISAGREE?
MMM!

POOR BEN! IF HE CHANGES BACK TO THE THING AGAIN, I DON'T WANNA BE AROUND TO SEE IT!

THE CONVERSATION'S GETTIN' TOO MUSHY, GANG! I'M CUTTIN' OUT FOR A WHILE!
WAIT A MINUTE, JUNIOR! WHAT ABOUT ALL THAT UNFINISHED FAN MAIL?


AW, I'LL READ IT LATER! I'M GONNA GET DOWN TO THE GARAGE AND FOOL AROUND WITH MY NEW TR-4!
OKAY, KID! SEE YOU LATER!
POF!

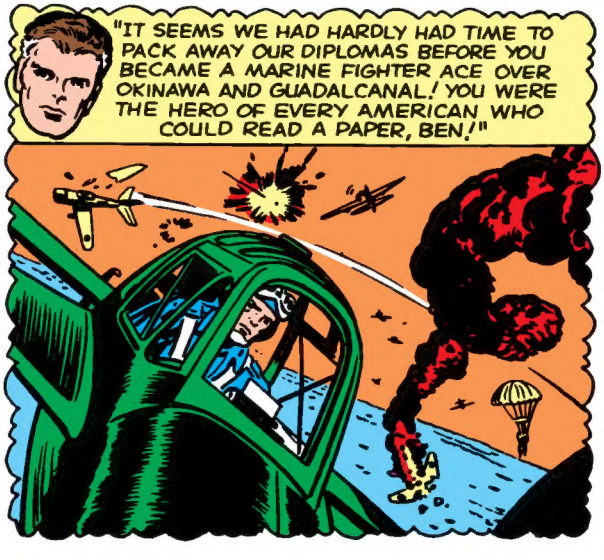

CAN'T BLAME THE SQUIRT FOR GETTING RESTLESS, REED! TEEN-AGERS HAVE TO KEEP ON THE GO ALL THE TIME!
YOU'RE RIGHT, BEN! REMEMBER HOW WE WERE WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER?
PERHAPS OUR FANS WOULD LIKE TO HEAR THIS, REED.


"YOU'RE RIGHT, SUE! A LOT OF READERS HAVE ASKED FOR MORE INFO ABOUT OUR PAST! WELL, I REMEMBER THE TIME BEN AND I FIRST MET, AS ROOMMATES AT STATE U.---"
I'M BEN GRIMM, RICHARDS! MEBBE YOU HEARD OF ME?
SURE, GRIMM! WHO HASN'T HEARD OF STATE U's FOOTBALL HOT-SHOT!

LOOK, FANCY PANTS, MEBBE I DID GET HERE ON A FOOTBALL SCHOLORSHIP INSTEAD OF BEIN' A BIG BRAIN LIKE YOU, BUT...
RELAX, ROOMMATE! I'VE GOT A HUNCH WE'RE GOING TO GET ALONG FINE!

"AND MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT! BEN AND I BECAME FAST FRIENDS FROM THE START! I WAS A MILLIONAIRE'S SON, AND HE WAS FROM THE WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS, BUT I CHEERED LOUDER THAN ANYBODY WHEN HE MADE ALL-AMERICAN!"

YOU WEREN'T JUST SITTIN' ON YOUR BACKSIDE YOURSELF, REED! WHAT ABOUT ALL THOSE PRIZES YOU WON FOR SCIENTIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT?
THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, BEN! AND SO WAS THE TIME, AFTER GRADUATION, WHEN WE FOUGHT THE BIGGEST FIGHT OF ALL, ON THE SAME TEAM.

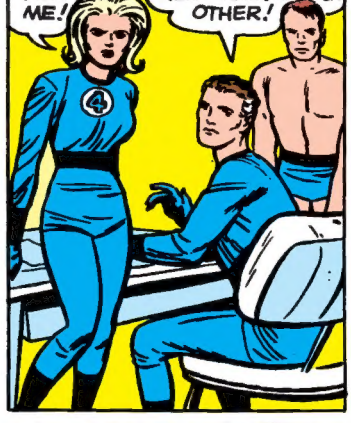

"IT SEEMS WE HAD HARDLY HAD TIME TO PACK AWAY OUR DIPLOMAS BEFORE YOU BECAME A MARINE FIGHTER ACE OVER OKINAWA AND GUADALCANAL! YOU WERE THE HERO OF EVERY AMERICAN WHO COULD READ A PAPER, BEN!"

"YOU DIDN'T GET AS MUCH PUBLICITY, REED, BECAUSE YOU WERE BEHIND THE LINES, WORKING WITH THE UNDERGROUND FOR O.S.S.! BUT THERE'S MANY A FREEDOM FIGHTER WHO WOULDN'T BE AROUND TO TELL THE STORY TODAY IF NOT FOR YOU RISKIN' YOUR LIFE FOR 'IM, MISTER!"

"I SUPPOSE WE **BOTH** DID OUR SHARE, BEN! BUT ALL THE TIME I WAS AT THE FRONT, I DREAMED OF THE DAY I'D RETURN HOME--TO THE GIRL WHO WAS ALWAYS IN MY THOUGHTS! THE GIRL I HAD LEFT BEHIND..."

PLEASE, REED--LET'S SKIP OVER THAT PART OF IT! IT--IT'S RATHER PAINFUL FOR ME!

BUT, SUE, YOU KNOW IT'S **YOU** I'M TALKING ABOUT! IT'S **ALWAYS** BEEN YOU, SINCE WE WERE KIDS TOGETHER LIVING NEXT DOOR TO EACH OTHER!



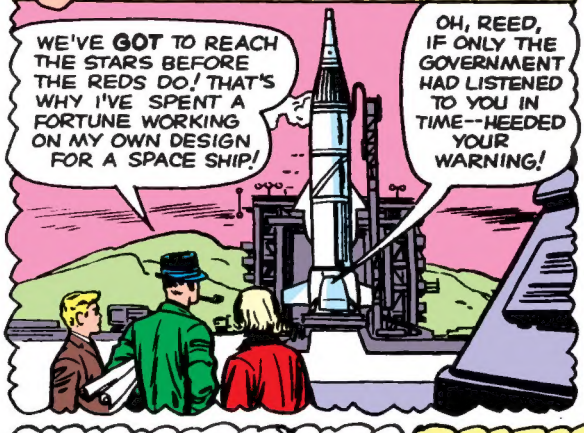
THAT'S JUST IT, REED! I **KNOW** HOW YOU FEEL--AND I DON'T EVER WANT TO HURT YOU! BUT--

BUT THERE'S STILL THE SHADOW OF SUB-MARINER BETWEEN US! I UNDERSTAND, MY DEAR! I WON'T MENTION IT AGAIN--NOT UNTIL YOU'VE MADE YOUR DECISION, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

"I GUESS THINGS NEVER TURN OUT EXACTLY AS WE WANT THEM TO! THE GIRL I WANTED WAS STILL OUT OF REACH, AND THE **WORLD** WE HAD FOUGHT FOR WAS **ALSO** NOT YET OURS!

WE'VE **GOT** TO REACH THE STARS BEFORE THE REDS DO! THAT'S WHY I'VE SPENT A FORTUNE WORKING ON MY OWN DESIGN FOR A SPACE SHIP!

OH, REED, IF ONLY THE GOVERNMENT HAD LISTENED TO YOU IN TIME--HEEDED YOUR WARNING!

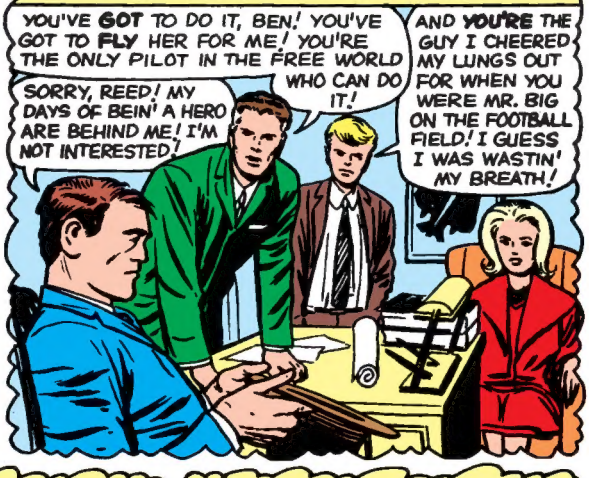


"ALL MY SCIENTIFIC TRAINING, ALL MY TALENT AND RESOURCES HAD GONE INTO THE STAR SHIP, BUT I STILL NEEDED ONE MORE THING..."

YOU'VE **GOT** TO DO IT, BEN! YOU'VE GOT TO **FLY** HER FOR ME! YOU'RE THE ONLY PILOT IN THE FREE WORLD WHO CAN DO IT!

SORRY, REED! MY DAYS OF BEIN' A HERO ARE BEHIND ME! I'M NOT INTERESTED!

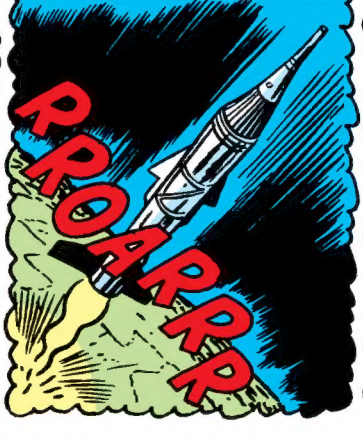
AND **YOU'RE** THE GUY I CHEERED MY LUNGS OUT FOR WHEN YOU WERE MR. BIG ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD! I GUESS I WAS WASTIN' MY BREATH!



BEN, NOBODY CAN **FORCE** YOU TO PILOT THAT SHIP, BUT **I'M** GOING ALONG, AND SO IS JOHNNY! AT LEAST WE'LL SHOW REED THAT **WE'RE** NOT AFRAID!

AFRAID?!! NO ONE EVER USED THAT WORD TO ME BEFORE! OKAY, I'LL **DO** IT! IT'S CRAZY, BUT YOU GOT YOURSELF A PILOT!

"AND SO, IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, SECRETLY, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, WE TOOK OFF--ON THE MOST FATEFUL JOURNEY OF OUR LIVES!



"THE SHIP WAS EVERYTHING I PRAYED SHE WOULD BE! ALL CONDITIONS WERE GO! IT LOOKED AS THOUGH OUR MISSION WOULD SUCCEED, UNTIL--

UP AHEAD--! WE'RE HEADING RIGHT INTO A **COSMIC STORM!**

"COSMIC STORM! THE MYSTERIOUS, DREADED SPACE MENACE THAT NO HUMANS HAD EVER FACED BEFORE! IT BUFFETED OUR SHIP ABOUT LIKE A FEATHER IN A HURRICANE--BUT IT DID FAR WORSE THAN THAT...
"SILENTLY, INVISIBLY, INEXORABLY, THE STRANGE COSMIC RAYS POURED IN THRU THE SHIP, STRIKING ALL OF US WITH A POWER AND A FORCE UNEQUALLED BY ANYTHING IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE!
"THE REST WAS LIKE A NIGHTMARE! ONLY BEN'S SUPERB SKILL ENABLED US TO SURVIVE A CRASH LANDING BACK ON EARTH--A LANDING THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE STRANGEST SAGA WE'VE EVER KNOWN!
THANK HEAVENS WE'RE ALIVE! WE'RE ALL ALIVE!
"YES, WE WERE ALIVE--AND MORE THAN JUST ALIVE! MUCH MUCH MORE!"
WHA-WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?
I'M CHANGING! I'M TURNING INTO--INTO--
--A THING!
"AND WILL WE EVER FORGET THAT FIRST SIGHT OF JOHNNY, BURSTING INTO LIVING FLAME...?"
JOHNNY! YOUR BODY--IT'S A BLAZE OF FIRE!
I'M A HUMAN TORCH!
I'M LIGHTER THAN AIR!
I CAN FLY!
I CAN DO ANYTHING!
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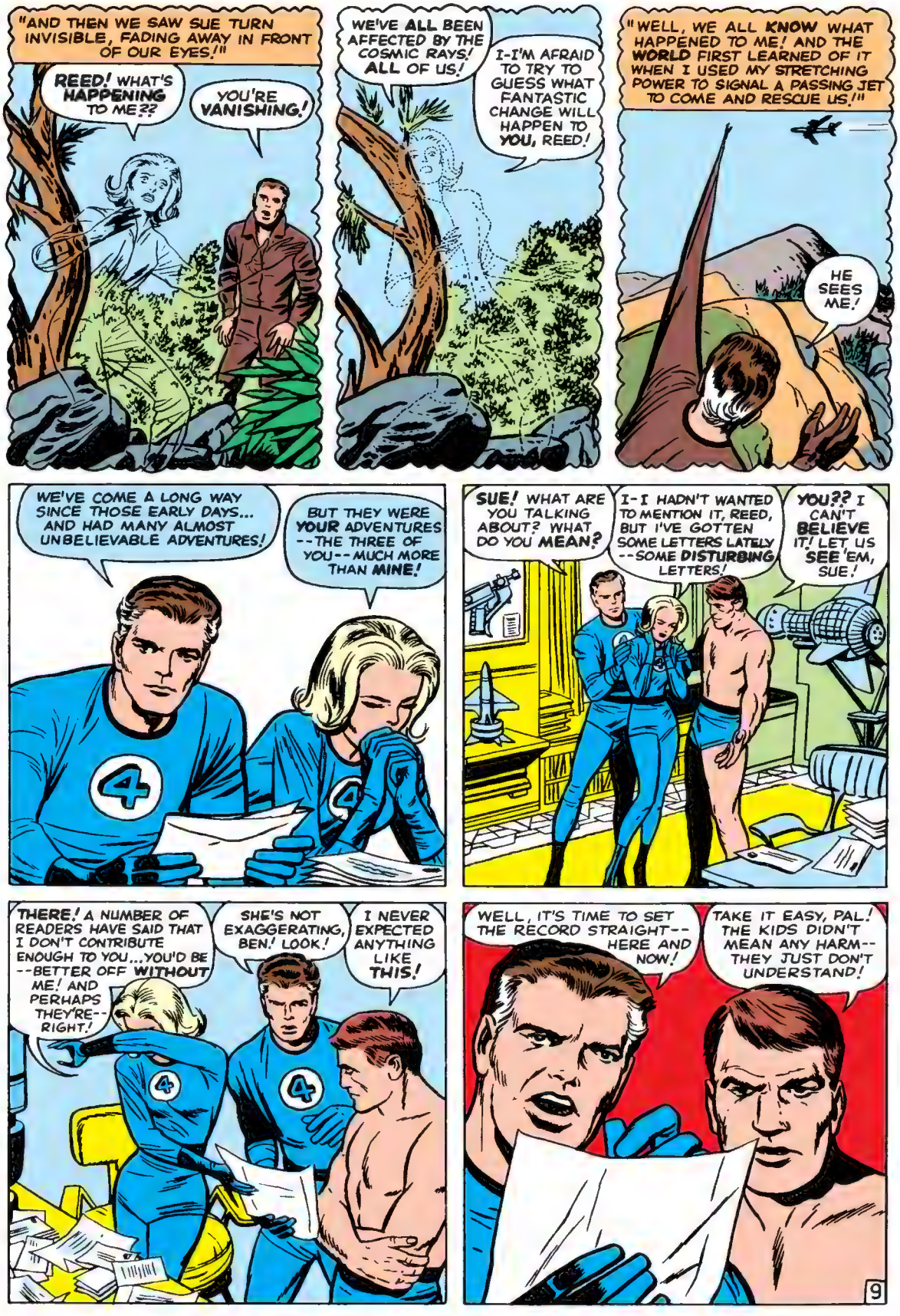
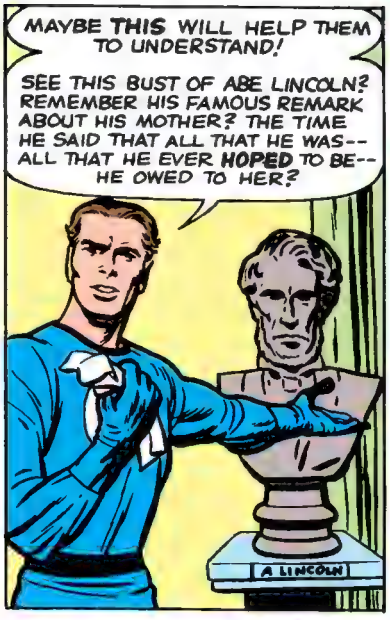
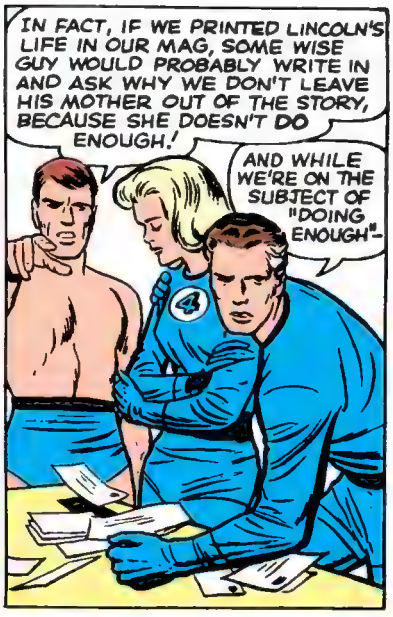
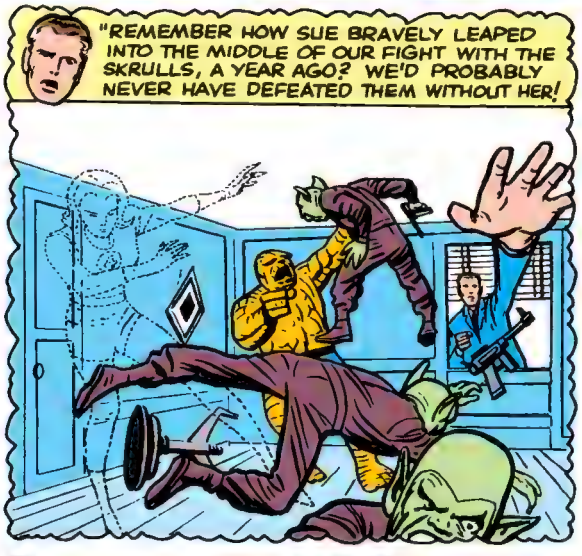
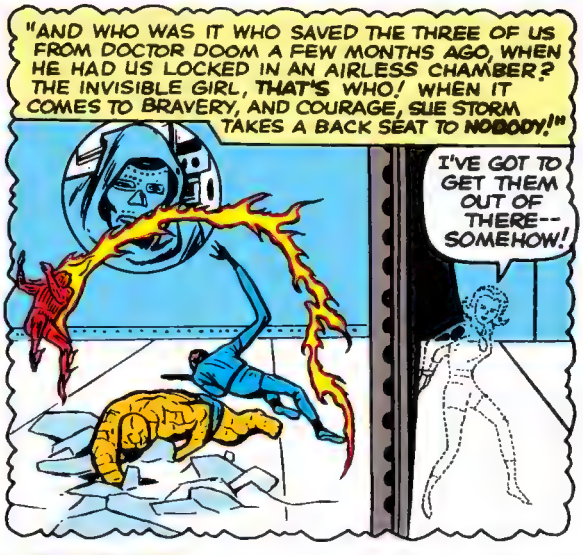

"AND THEN WE SAW SUE TURN INVISIBLE, FADING AWAY IN FRONT OF OUR EYES!"
REED! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME??
YOU'RE VANISHING!
WE'VE ALL BEEN AFFECTED BY THE COSMIC RAYS! ALL OF US!
I-I'M AFRAID TO TRY TO GUESS WHAT FANTASTIC CHANGE WILL HAPPEN TO YOU, REED!
"WELL, WE ALL KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME! AND THE WORLD FIRST LEARNED OF IT WHEN I USED MY STRETCHING POWER TO SIGNAL A PASSING JET TO COME AND RESCUE US!"
HE SEES ME!
WE'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THOSE EARLY DAYS... AND HAD MANY ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE ADVENTURES!
BUT THEY WERE YOUR ADVENTURES --THE THREE OF YOU-- MUCH MORE THAN MINE!
SUE! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I-I HADN'T WANTED TO MENTION IT, REED, BUT I'VE GOTTEN SOME LETTERS LATELY --SOME DISTURBING LETTERS!
YOU?? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! LET US SEE 'EM, SUE!
THERE! A NUMBER OF READERS HAVE SAID THAT I DON'T CONTRIBUTE ENOUGH TO YOU...YOU'D BE --BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME! AND PERHAPS THEY'RE-- RIGHT!
SHE'S NOT EXAGGERATING, BEN! LOOK!
I NEVER EXPECTED ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
WELL, IT'S TIME TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT-- HERE AND NOW!
TAKE IT EASY, PAL! THE KIDS DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM-- THEY JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND!


MAYBE THIS WILL HELP THEM TO UNDERSTAND!
SEE THIS BUST OF ABE LINCOLN? REMEMBER HIS FAMOUS REMARK ABOUT HIS MOTHER? THE TIME HE SAID THAT ALL THAT HE WAS--ALL THAT HE EVER HOPED TO BE--HE OWED TO HER?
A LINCOLN

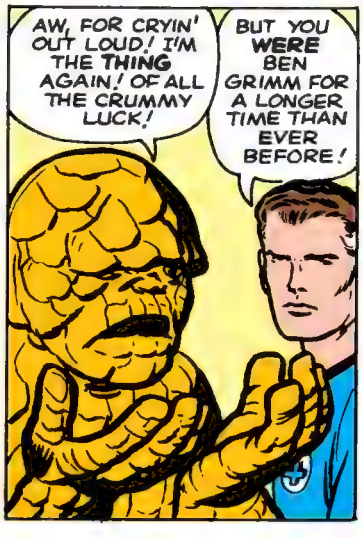
LINCOLN'S MOTHER WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WORLD TO HIM! BUT--SHE DIDN'T HELP HIM FIGHT THE CIVIL WAR! SHE DIDN'T SPLIT RAILS FOR HIM! SHE DIDN'T BATTLE WITH HIS ENEMIES!


IN FACT, IF WE PRINTED LINCOLN'S LIFE IN OUR MAG, SOME WISE GUY WOULD PROBABLY WRITE IN AND ASK WHY WE DON'T LEAVE HIS MOTHER OUT OF THE STORY, BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T DO ENOUGH!
AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF "DOING ENOUGH"--


"REMEMBER HOW SUE BRAVELY LEAPED INTO THE MIDDLE OF OUR FIGHT WITH THE SKRULLS, A YEAR AGO? WE'D PROBABLY NEVER HAVE DEFEATED THEM WITHOUT HER!

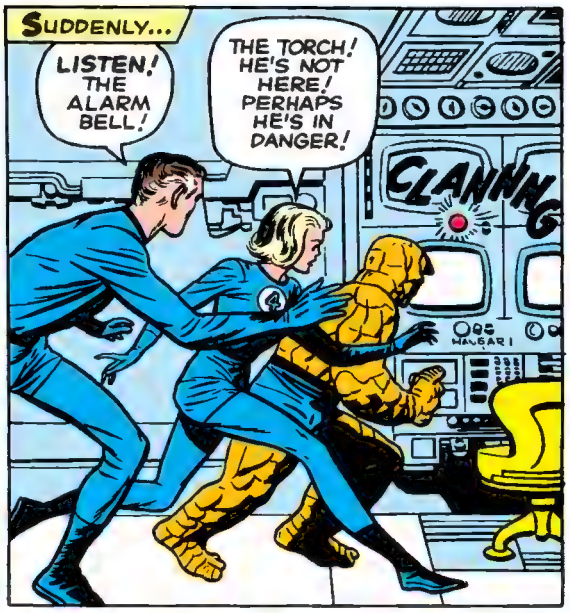

"AND WHO WAS IT WHO SAVED THE THREE OF US FROM DOCTOR DOOM A FEW MONTHS AGO, WHEN HE HAD US LOCKED IN AN AIRLESS CHAMBER? THE INVISIBLE GIRL, THAT'S WHO! WHEN IT COMES TO BRAVERY, AND COURAGE, SUE STORM TAKES A BACK SEAT TO NOBODY!"
I'VE GOT TO GET THEM OUT OF THERE--SOMEHOW!

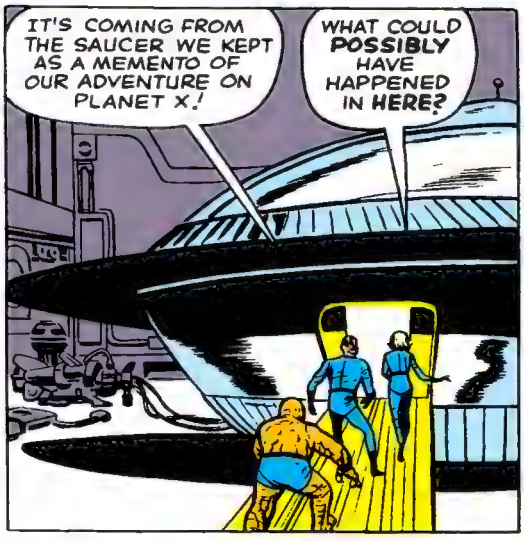
IF YOU READERS WANNA SEE WOMEN FIGHTIN' ALL THE TIME, THEN GO SEE LADY WRESTLERS!
BEN! TAKE IT EASY, FELLA!


AW, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! I'M THE THING AGAIN! OF ALL THE CRUMMY LUCK!
BUT YOU WERE BEN GRIMM FOR A LONGER TIME THAN EVER BEFORE!

BIG DEAL! WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES ANOTHER FEW MINUTES MAKE?? I'M STILL NOTHIN' MORE THAN A GRUESOME GORILLA!
NO, BEN--NO! DON'T SAY IT! YOU MUSTN'T!

I REALIZE WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN, INDULGING IN SELF-PITY WHEN I SHOULD BE TRYING TO COMFORT YOU! YOU'RE NO MONSTER, BEN--YOU'RE ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD!
SURE, KID, SURE! AND MAYBE SOME DAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LOOK AT ME WHEN YA SAY IT--WITHOUT FLINCHIN' AT THE SIGHT!
BEN, I'LL KEEP WORKING ON A FORMULA TO MAKE YOU NORMAL AGAIN--PERMANENTLY! NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES, I'LL NEVER GIVE UP! WE'LL DO IT YET, OLD FRIEND!





GOOD WORK, HOT-HEAD! SUE NEVER SUSPECTED YOU WERE RIGGIN' THAT CAKE UP FOR HER!
A BIRTHDAY CAKE--FOR ME! OH--YOU REMEMBERED!
SURPRISE, HONEY!
OF COURSE WE REMEMBERED, SIS! WE'VE BEEN PLANNIN' THIS PARTY FOR DAYS!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO SUE

I-I'M SO CHOKED UP I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
FIRST TIME I EVER HEARD A FEMALE ADMIT A THING LIKE THAT!
MANY HAPPY RETURNS, SUE--TO OUR FAVORITE PARTNER!
TO SUE

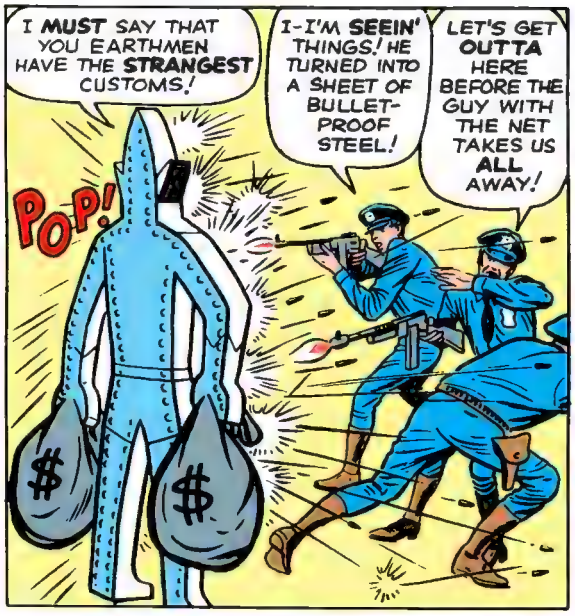
IT'S MR. LUMPKIN AGAIN!
WITH A BIGGER SACK OF MAIL FOR US THAN EVER!
BLANKETTY BLANK FANS, AND COMIC MAGAZINE HEROES, AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR PAGES! OHHH, MY ACHIN' BACK!

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE PRECEDING STORY IS OUR WAY OF ANSWERING MANY OF THE INTERESTING QUESTIONS THAT OUR READERS HAVE WRITTEN! FROM TIME TO TIME IN FUTURE ISSUES, WE SHALL ATTEMPT TO PICTORIALLY COMMENT ON OTHER LETTERS FROM YOU... OUR VALUED FANS!

The END

AT LAST THE FANTASTIC FOUR MEET A FOE WHOSE POWER IS EVEN GREATER THAN THEIRS!! HERE IS:
THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN
HE'S THE MOST DANGEROUS CREATURE IN THE GALAXY!
HE EVEN LAUGHS AT MY FLAME!
IF WE CAN'T CLOBBER HIM... WHO CAN?
HE LOOKS SO HUMOROUS-- HOW CAN HE BE SUCH A MENACE?
STORY: STAN LEE
ART: JACK KIRBY
INKING: DICK AYERS
LETTERING: ART SIMEK

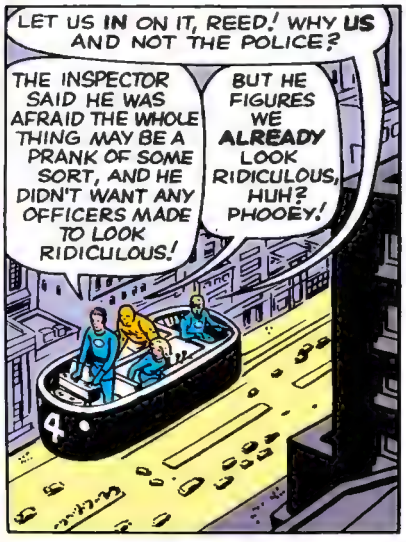
MANY STRANGE THINGS CAN HAPPEN IN HOBO JUNGLES, BUT WE FEEL SAFE IN SAYING THAT THIS IS THE STRANGEST...
HOLY MACKERAL!
WH-WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?
THE PLANET POPPUP, IN THE TENTH GALAXY! WHERE ELSE?
THAT SETTLES IT! I'LL NEVER DRINK NUTHIN' STRONGER THAN MILK AGAIN!
I AM RAVENOUSLY HUNGRY AFTER MY LONG JOURNEY! MAY I SHARE YOUR FOOD?
LISTEN, CORNBALL, WE'RE LEGITIMATE HOBOES, AND WE DON'T LIKE FREE-LOADERS, NO MATTER WHERE THEY COME FROM!
YEAH! IF YA WANNA EAT, YOU GOTTA PAY FOR IT! WITH NICE COLD CASH!
CASH? WHAT A STRANGE WORD! WHAT IS CASH?
SAY, ARE YOU TRYIN' TO PULL OUR LEG, PIN-HEAD?
CASH IS WHAT THEY KEEP IN BANKS, MISTER! JUST GO TO A BANK AND ASK FOR SOME! THEY LOVE TO GIVE IT AWAY!
MANY THANKS! I'LL DO JUST THAT!
SUCH A FRIENDLY PLANET! I THINK I'M GOING TO LIKE IT HERE!
POP!
SSSSSWISSSH!
EDITOR'S NOTE: BY NOW, YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING THAT STAN AND JACK HAVE FLIPPED THEIR LIDS! BUT WAIT--THINGS MAY GET EVEN WHACKIER!
SALUTATIONS, MISTER BANKER! I HAVE COME FOR SOME CASH SO THAT I MAY BUY FOOD!
GOOD GRIEF! HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?? THE VAULT IS STILL LOCKED!
THE SAME WAY ANYBODY WOULD GET IN, OF COURSE! I MADE MYSELF SMALL ENOUGH TO CRAWL UNDER THE DOOR! LIKE THIS!
POP!
GET A DOCTOR! I'M GOING MAD!
THAT MUST BE WHAT CASH IS! I'D BETTER TAKE ENOUGH OF IT! I EXPECT TO BE HERE FOR A WHILE!
POP!
LOOK! MR. HOWELL WASN'T HYSTERICAL! THERE IS A KOOKIE CHARACTER TRYIN' TO ROB THE BANK!
DROP THAT DOUGH AND REACH, MISTER-- OR WE'LL START BLASTIN'!
2

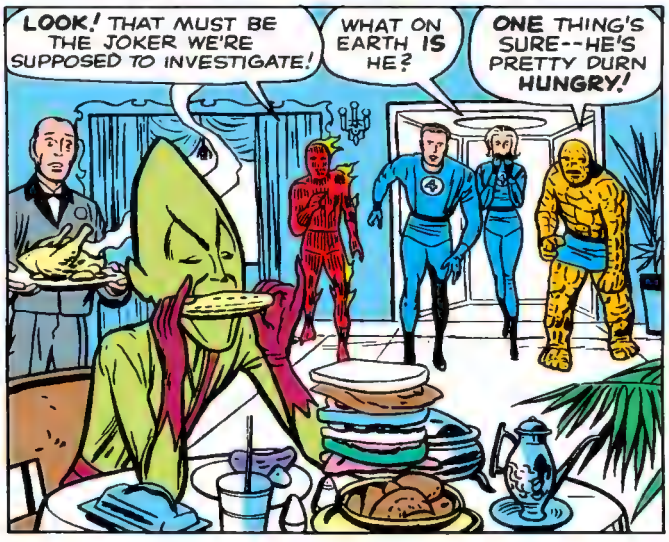

I MUST SAY THAT YOU EARTHMEN HAVE THE STRANGEST CUSTOMS!
I-I'M SEEIN' THINGS! HE TURNED INTO A SHEET OF BULLET-PROOF STEEL!
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE BEFORE THE GUY WITH THE NET TAKES US ALL AWAY!
POP!

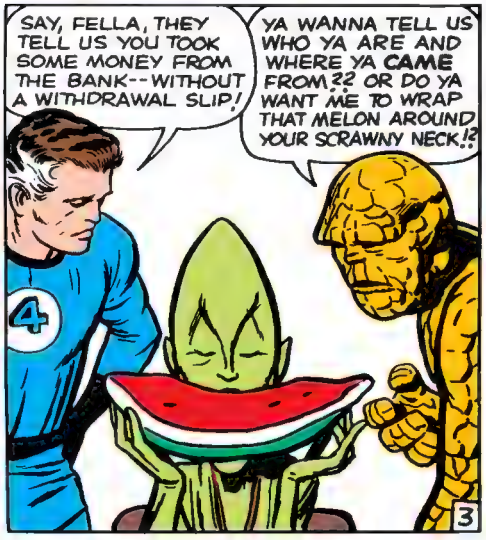
WHAT AN AMUSING PLANET! THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING GOING ON EVERY MINUTE!
AH, A FEMALE-TYPE EARTHLING! HOW ADORABLE! AFTER YOU, MY DEAR!
I THOUGHT I'D MET EVERY KIND OF WOLF--BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!

MINUTES LATER, A DEPUTY POLICE INSPECTOR ACTIVATES A CLOSED-CIRCUIT TV SYSTEM AND OUR STORY REALLY BEGINS TO GATHER STEAM...
CALLING THE FANTASTIC FOUR! EMERGENCY! CODE FIVE! POLICE PRIORITY! COME IN, FANTASTIC FOUR!

AN IMAGE BEGINS TO FORM ON THE ILLUMINATED SCREEN, AND THEN...
I KNOW THIS SOUNDS BATTY, BUT GET DOWN TO THE FLAMINGO RESTAURANT ON THE DOUBLE!
WHY? WHAT'S WRONG?


LET US IN ON IT, REED! WHY US AND NOT THE POLICE?
THE INSPECTOR SAID HE WAS AFRAID THE WHOLE THING MAY BE A PRANK OF SOME SORT, AND HE DIDN'T WANT ANY OFFICERS MADE TO LOOK RIDICULOUS!
BUT HE FIGURES WE ALREADY LOOK RIDICULOUS, HUH? PHOOEY!


LOOK! THAT MUST BE THE JOKER WE'RE SUPPOSED TO INVESTIGATE!
WHAT ON EARTH IS HE?
ONE THING'S SURE--HE'S PRETTY DURN HUNGRY!


SAY, FELLA, THEY TELL US YOU TOOK SOME MONEY FROM THE BANK--WITHOUT A WITHDRAWAL SLIP!
YA WANNA TELL US WHO YA ARE AND WHERE YA CAME FROM?? OR DO YA WANT ME TO WRAP THAT MELON AROUND YOUR SCRAWNY NECK!?
3

"MAY I COMPLIMENT YOU EARTHLINGS ON YOUR COLORFUL LANGUAGE! BUT, TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, I COME FROM THE PLANET POPPUP! IT'S A CHARMING WORLD, BUT ONE GETS BORED WITH ALL THE DANGERS ON POPPUP--WHICH IS WHY I DECIDED TO TAKE A VACATION--TO EARTH!

"ON POPPUP, OUR EVOLUTIONARY PROCESSES ARE SO SWIFT, THAT WE CAN CHANGE OURSELVES INTO **ANYTHING**, IN ORDER TO SURVIVE THE MENACES WHICH CONSTANTLY ATTACK US!"

THAT URRPO-FISH WILL BREAK HIS TEETH IF HE TRIES TO BITE ME NOW!

POP!

IT'S ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE! HERE ON **EARTH**, IT TAKES **AGES** FOR THE SMALLEST EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE, SUCH AS MANKIND GAINING THE POWER TO WALK ERECT! BUT ON **HIS** HOME PLANET, THEY SEEM ABLE TO CHANGE INTO **ANYTHING**, IN A SPLIT-SECOND! THAT IS --IF WE CAN **BELIEVE** HIM!

I BELIEVE 'IM! I BELIEVE 'IM!

"BUT I'M PROBABLY BORING YOU WITH THESE DETAILS! EVERYONE **KNOWS** HOW WE POPPUPIANS CAN TURN OURSELVES INTO **ANYTHING, JUST BY THINKING OF IT!** IN FACT, THE WAY I **REACHED** YOUR FRIENDLY PLANET WAS BY BECOMING A SELF-POWERED SPACE SHIP!"

IF YOU'RE TRYIN' TO MAKE FOOLS OF US, WALNUT-HEAD, I'M GONNA MOP UP THE PLACE WITH YA!

HOLD IT, THING! FIRST, LET'S EXPLAIN SOME OF OUR EARTH CUSTOMS TO HIM--SUCH AS THE FACT THAT YOU CAN'T JUST TAKE MONEY OUT OF A BANK!

REALLY? THEN WHY DIDN'T THEY **STOP** ME?

BROTHER, YOU'RE JUST **BEGGIN'** FOR IT! NOW RELAX--IT'LL ONLY HURT A MINUTE!

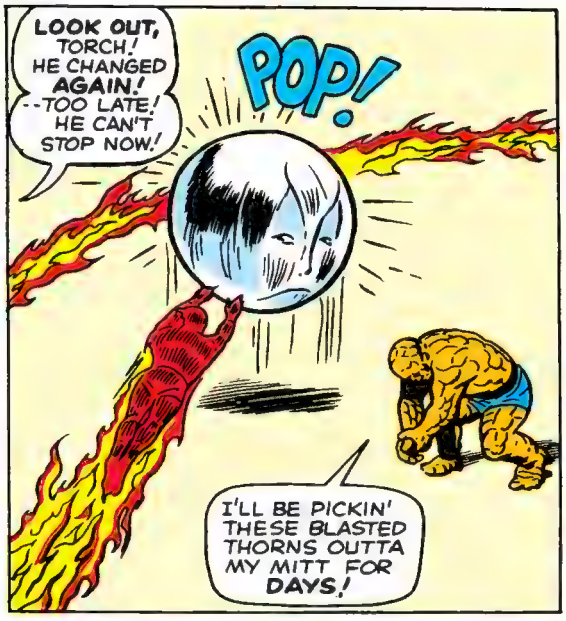
CAREFUL, MY EXCITABLE FRIEND! YOU'RE LIABLE TO FIND ME A BIT **THORNY!**

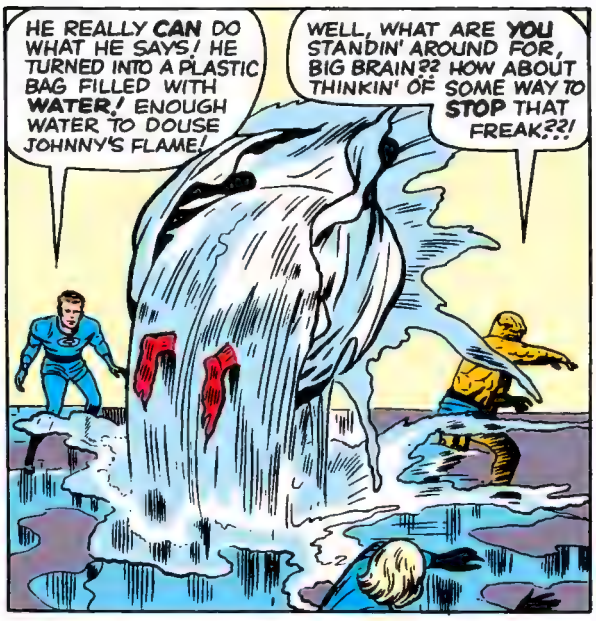
YEOW!

POP!

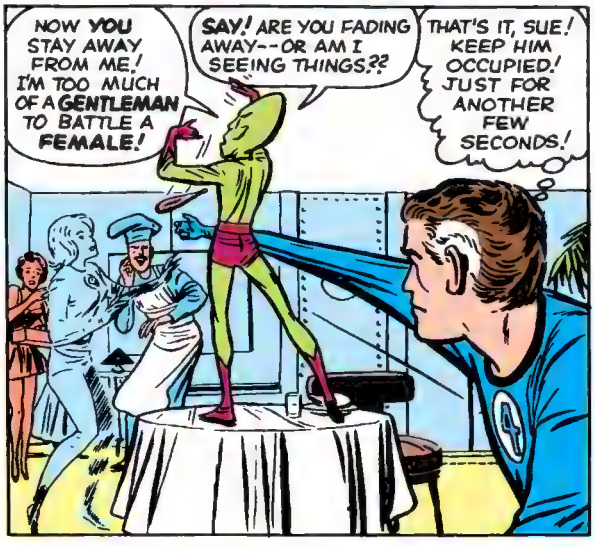
HEY, THAT WASN'T **FUNNY!** I'LL SETTLE THAT LITTLE WISE-GUY'S HASH ONCE AND FOR ALL!

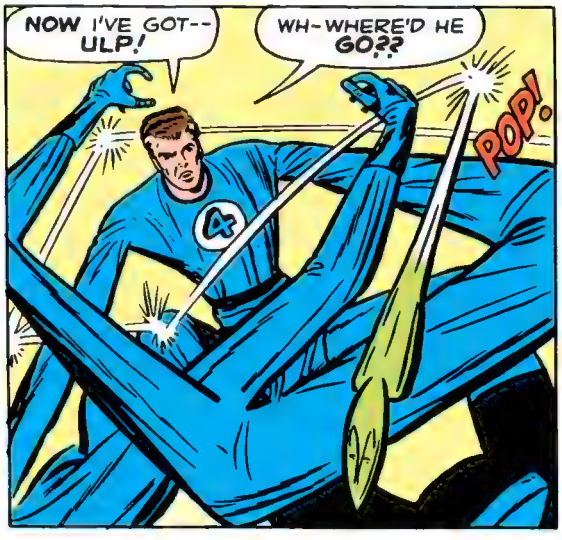
FLAME ON!

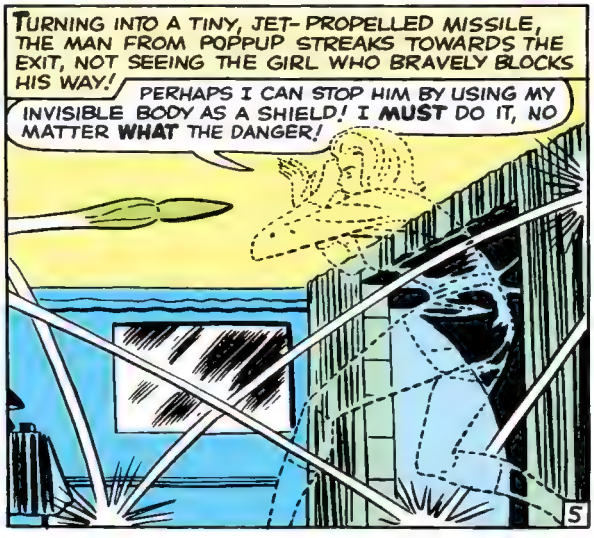

LOOK OUT, TORCH! HE CHANGED AGAIN! --TOO LATE! HE CAN'T STOP NOW!
POP!
I'LL BE PICKIN' THESE BLASTED THORNS OUTTA MY MITT FOR DAYS!

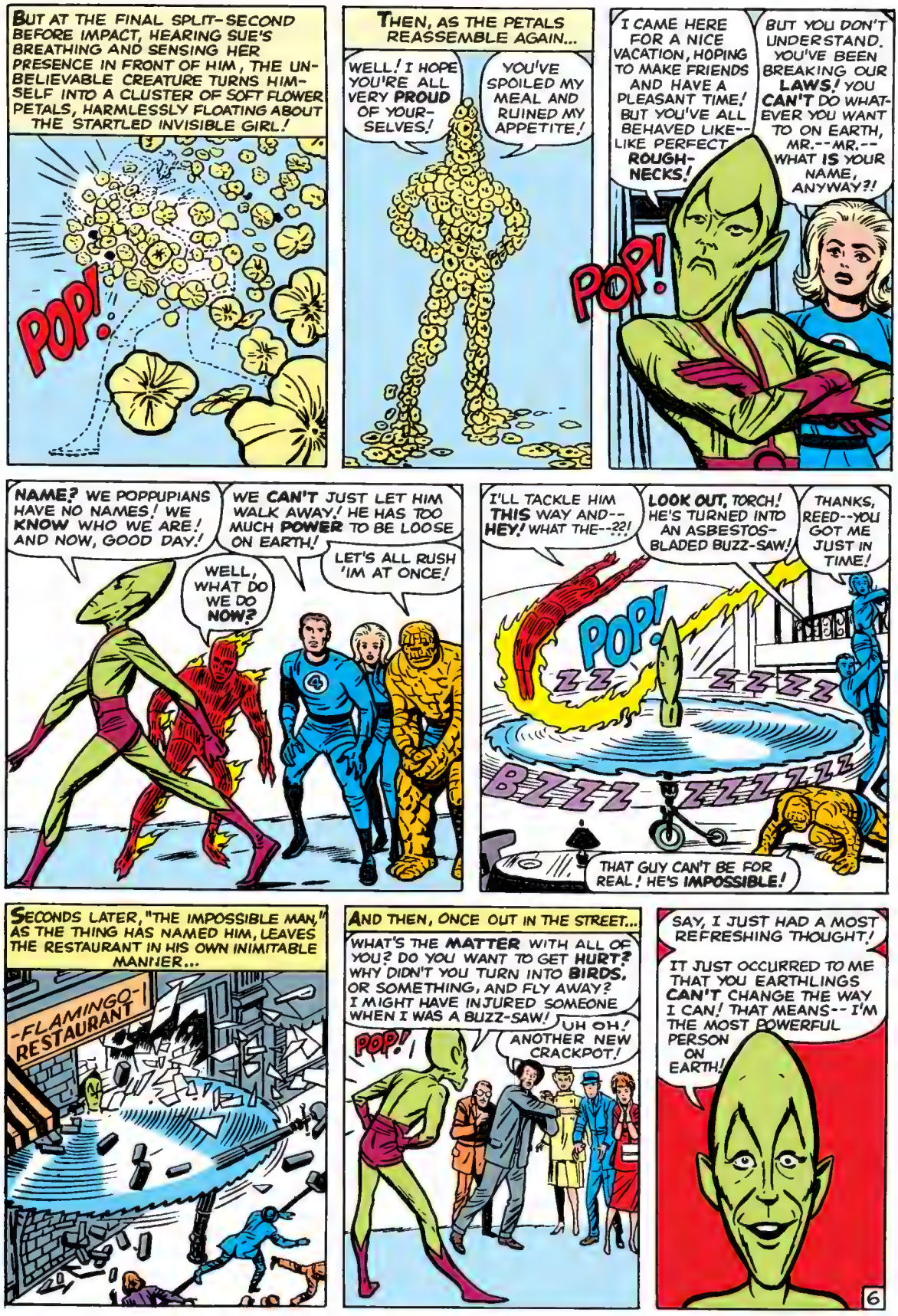

HE REALLY CAN DO WHAT HE SAYS! HE TURNED INTO A PLASTIC BAG FILLED WITH WATER! ENOUGH WATER TO DOUSE JOHNNY'S FLAME!
WELL, WHAT ARE YOU STANDIN' AROUND FOR, BIG BRAIN?? HOW ABOUT THINKIN' OF SOME WAY TO STOP THAT FREAK??!

TAKE IT EASY, THING! WE'VE NEVER BEEN UP AGAINST ANYONE LIKE HIM BEFORE! THIS CALLS FOR NEW STRATEGY!
HMMF! AND I THOUGHT YOU EARTHLINGS WERE FRIENDLY! A FINE WAY TO TREAT VISITORS! YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED!
I'M MORTIFIED!


NOW YOU STAY AWAY FROM ME! I'M TOO MUCH OF A GENTLEMAN TO BATTLE A FEMALE!
SAY! ARE YOU FADING AWAY--OR AM I SEEING THINGS??
THAT'S IT, SUE! KEEP HIM OCCUPIED! JUST FOR ANOTHER FEW SECONDS!

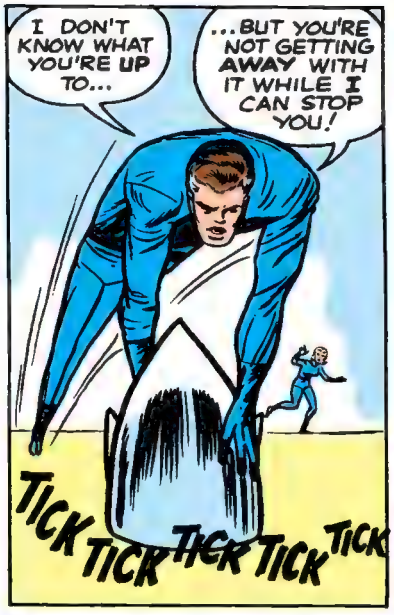

NOW I'VE GOT-- ULP!
WH-WHERE'D HE GO??
POP!


TURNING INTO A TINY, JET-PROPELLED MISSILE, THE MAN FROM POPPUP STREAKS TOWARDS THE EXIT, NOT SEEING THE GIRL WHO BRAVELY BLOCKS HIS WAY!
PERHAPS I CAN STOP HIM BY USING MY INVISIBLE BODY AS A SHIELD! I MUST DO IT, NO MATTER WHAT THE DANGER!


BUT AT THE FINAL SPLIT-SECOND BEFORE IMPACT, HEARING SUE'S BREATHING AND SENSING HER PRESENCE IN FRONT OF HIM, THE UNBELIEVABLE CREATURE TURNS HIMSELF INTO A CLUSTER OF SOFT FLOWER PETALS, HARMLESSLY FLOATING ABOUT THE STARTLED INVISIBLE GIRL!
POP!
THEN, AS THE PETALS REASSEMBLE AGAIN...
WELL! I HOPE YOU'RE ALL VERY PROUD OF YOURSELVES!
YOU'VE SPOILED MY MEAL AND RUINED MY APPETITE!
I CAME HERE FOR A NICE VACATION, HOPING TO MAKE FRIENDS AND HAVE A PLEASANT TIME! BUT YOU'VE ALL BEHAVED LIKE--LIKE PERFECT ROUGHNECKS!
BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU'VE BEEN BREAKING OUR LAWS! YOU CAN'T DO WHATEVER YOU WANT TO ON EARTH, MR.--MR.--WHAT IS YOUR NAME, ANYWAY?!
POP!
NAME? WE POPPUPIANS HAVE NO NAMES! WE KNOW WHO WE ARE! AND NOW, GOOD DAY!
WE CAN'T JUST LET HIM WALK AWAY! HE HAS TOO MUCH POWER TO BE LOOSE ON EARTH!
WELL, WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
LET'S ALL RUSH 'IM AT ONCE!
I'LL TACKLE HIM THIS WAY AND--HEY! WHAT THE--??!
LOOK OUT, TORCH! HE'S TURNED INTO AN ASBESTOS-BLADED BUZZ-SAW!
THANKS, REED--YOU GOT ME JUST IN TIME!
POP!
ZZ
ZZZZ
BZZZ
ZZZZZ
THAT GUY CAN'T BE FOR REAL! HE'S IMPOSSIBLE!
SECONDS LATER, "THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN," AS THE THING HAS NAMED HIM, LEAVES THE RESTAURANT IN HIS OWN INIMITABLE MANNER...
-FLAMINGO-RESTAURANT
AND THEN, ONCE OUT IN THE STREET...
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ALL OF YOU? DO YOU WANT TO GET HURT? WHY DIDN'T YOU TURN INTO BIRDS, OR SOMETHING, AND FLY AWAY? I MIGHT HAVE INJURED SOMEONE WHEN I WAS A BUZZ-SAW!
POP!
UH OH! ANOTHER NEW CRACKPOT!
SAY, I JUST HAD A MOST REFRESHING THOUGHT!
IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME THAT YOU EARTHLINGS CAN'T CHANGE THE WAY I CAN! THAT MEANS--I'M THE MOST POWERFUL PERSON ON EARTH!
6

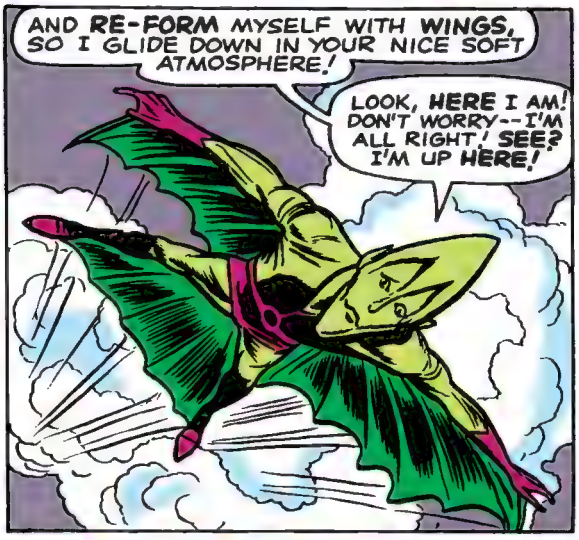
THIS VACATION OF MINE IS GOING TO BE EVEN MORE FUN THAN I THOUGHT! I CAN DO ANYTHING I WANT TO!
WOULD YOU MIND GETTING OUT OF THIS VEHICLE? I WOULD LIKE TO DRIVE IT FOR A WHILE!
GOWAN BACK TO THE MASQUERADE, CHARLIE! I GOT NO TIME TO PLAY GAMES!
TAXI
MY NAME ISN'T CHARLIE!
POP!
GANGWAY!
I JUST QUIT THE HACKIN' BUSINESS!
NO WONDER HE WAS RELUCTANT TO LEAVE THE CAB! THIS IS MOST DELICIOUS SPORT!
FASTER, HOTSHOT! I SEE 'IM! STEP ON IT BEFORE HE TURNS INTO A MACKERAL OR SOMETHIN'!
WE MUSTN'T LOSE HIM THIS TIME, BEN! BE CAREFUL!
4
TAXI
CAREFUL? YA NEVER BECOME A COMIC BOOK HERO BY BEIN' CAREFUL!
OH! IT'S ONE OF THE KILLJOYS AGAIN!
OKAY, LAUGHING BOY --END OF THE LINE!
RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR
7

NOW WE GOT A LITTLE SQUARIN' UP TO DO, SONNY!
HOLD IT, THING! BRUTE FORCE WON'T SETTLE HIM!
WE'VE GOT TO USE STRATEGY!
I WAS AFRAID OF THAT! HE'S CHANGED AGAIN! HE'S BECOME ONE OF THE HEAVIEST SUBSTANCES IN THE GALAXY!
WHO? A SKINNY RUNT LIKE HIM? HEY--YOU'RE RIGHT! I CAN HARDLY BUDGE 'IM!
POP!
LOOK! SOMEONE MUST HAVE SENT FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD!
STEP ASIDE, ALL FOUR OF YOU! THE GOVERNOR ORDERED US TO HANDLE THAT CHARACTER ONCE AND FOR ALL!
ALTHOUGH I CAN'T FIGGER OUT WHY HE SENT A WHOLE REGIMENT TO TAKE ONE LITTLE SQUIRT LIKE HIM INTO CUSTODY!
LISTEN TO ME, CAPTAIN! THIS "LITTLE SQUIRT", AS YOU CALL HIM, IS THE MOST DANGEROUS LIVING CREATURE ON EARTH! YOUR WEAPONS AND YOUR MEN WILL BE POWERLESS AGAINST HIM!
BROTHER, YOU BEEN WORKIN' TOO HARD! YOU'VE POPPED YOUR CORK!
THIS IS THE BEST VACATION I'VE EVER HAD!
THERE'S SOME NEW ACTIVITY GOING ON EVERY MINUTE!
I'M GOING TO RECOMMEND EARTH TO THE POPPUP TOURIST BUREAU!
HEY! WHERE'RE YOU GOIN'?
NOWHERE! I'M STAYING RIGHT HERE!
WHERE'D THAT BOMB COME FROM?? TAKE COVER! DISPERSE!
TICK
TICK TICK TICK
TICK
POP!

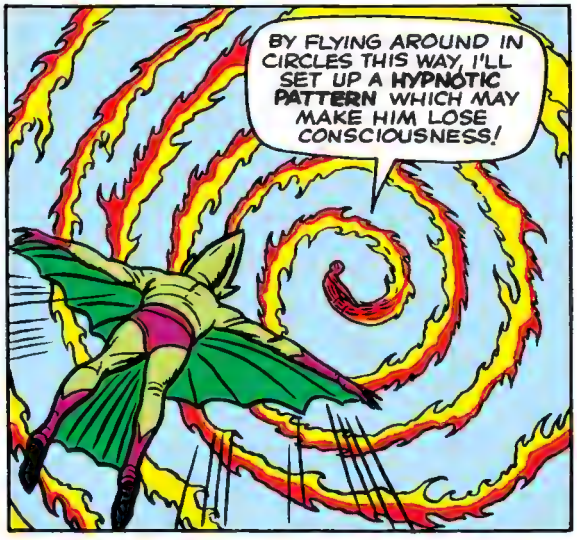

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO...
...BUT YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY WITH IT WHILE I CAN STOP YOU!
TICK TICK TICK TICK TICK

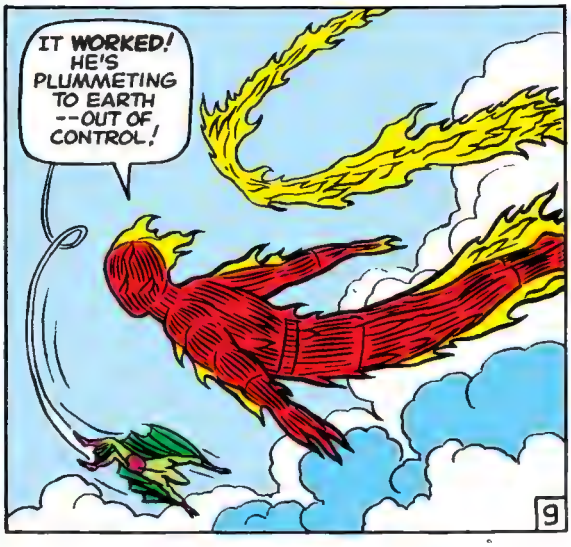
THERE! I'LL TOSS YOU UP INTO THE SUB-STRATOSPHERE!
WHEEE! THANKS! THIS IS FUN!

BUT NOW I WANT TO COME DOWN TO EARTH AGAIN...
SO I'LL JUST EXPLODE INTO A ZILLION PIECES!
BARROOM!

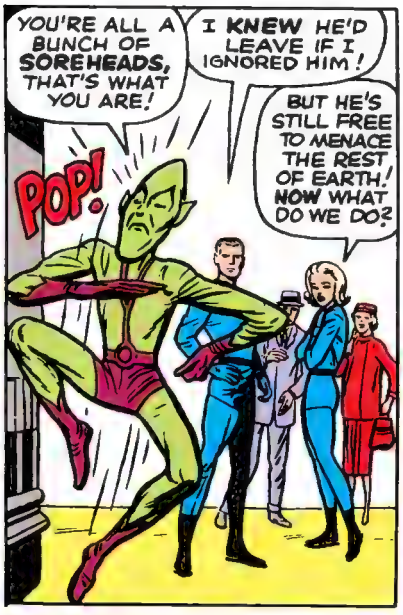

AND RE-FORM MYSELF WITH WINGS, SO I GLIDE DOWN IN YOUR NICE SOFT ATMOSPHERE!
LOOK, HERE I AM! DON'T WORRY--I'M ALL RIGHT! SEE? I'M UP HERE!

HE'S COMING BACK AGAIN!
WITH ALL HIS POWERS THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP HIM!
LET ME TRY! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
FLAME ON!
BOY! JUST GIVE ME ANOTHER CRACK AT 'IM!


BY FLYING AROUND IN CIRCLES THIS WAY, I'LL SET UP A HYPNOTIC PATTERN WHICH MAY MAKE HIM LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS!

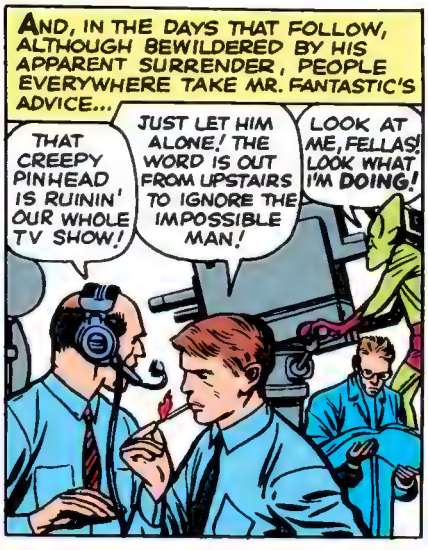

IT WORKED! HE'S PLUMMETING TO EARTH --OUT OF CONTROL!

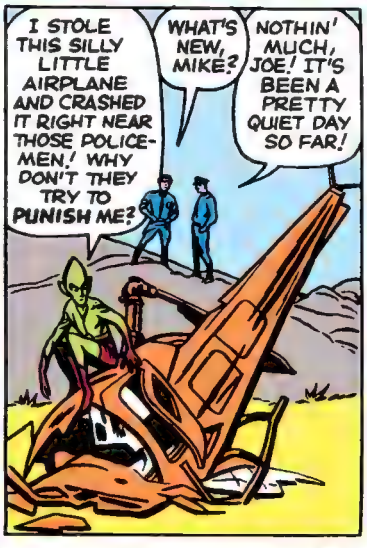
THE TORCH DID IT! WE'VE GOT HIM NOW!
I HOPE HE'S NOT INJURED! AFTER ALL, HE ISN'T REALLY BAD--HE'S JUST LIKE AN IRRESPONSIBLE CHILD!
HE SEEMS TO BE ALL RIGHT, SUE! BUT HIS PHYSICAL MAKE-UP IS SO ALIEN, I CAN'T BE SURE!
I KNEW IT! YOU DO LIKE ME! YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME! JUST FOR THAT, I'M GOING TO STAY HERE AND KID AROUND WITH YOU ALWAYS!
THIS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL FUN I'VE EVER HAD! I CAN DO ANYTHING I WANT TO, AND I HAVE ALL OF YOU FRIENDLY HUMANS TO PLAY WITH! OH, I'M SO GLAD I CAME TO EARTH! WHEEE! IT'S LIKE ONE BIG PARTY!
OKAY, REED, STEP ASIDE! I'M GONNA PULVERIZE THAT LAUGHIN' HYENA! JUST GIMME ROOM!
NO, THING! I'VE GOT ANOTHER IDEA!
JUST DO AS I SAY AND DON'T QUESTION ME!
HUH? YA MEAN LEAVE 'IM THERE??
C'MON, BEN! REED MUST KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING!
LET'S GO, GANG! TURN AROUND AND WALK AWAY FROM HIM!
WAIT! DON'T GO 'WAY! IF I MADE YOU ANGRY I'M SORRY!
HERE, HAVE A NICE GOLDEN EGG! IT OUGHTTA BE WORTH SOMETHING ON YOUR SILLY PLANET!
ONE WALLOP! THAT'S ALL I'D ASK--JUST ONE!
I WON'T LET YOU GO! I'LL TURN INTO THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA! I'LL STAY ON YOUR BACK AND I WON'T GET OFF! LOOK-- I WON'T LEAVE YOU!
POP!
SO STAY! WHO CARES?

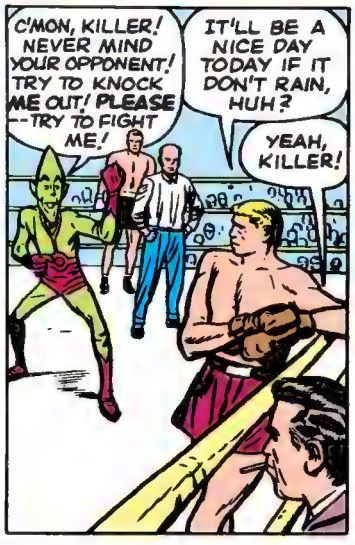

YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF SOREHEADS, THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE!
I KNEW HE'D LEAVE IF I IGNORED HIM!
BUT HE'S STILL FREE TO MENACE THE REST OF EARTH! NOW WHAT DO WE DO?
POP!

NOTHING! WE WON'T EVEN TRY TO FIGHT HIM! LET HIM DO WHATEVER HE WANTS TO!
HEY, IS THAT MISTER FANTASTIC TALKIN'??
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IS HE TURNIN' CHICKEN?? IS HE SCARED OF THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN?
4

LISTEN, EVERYBODY! THERE'S NO USE IN FIGHTING THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN! LET HIM HAVE HIS OWN WAY! IGNORE HIM! DON'T FIGHT HIM! THAT IS WHAT I SHALL RECOMMEND TO THE POLICE OF EVERY STATE IN THE NATION!
NEVER THOUGHT REED RICHARDS WOULD TURN YELLOW!
ME NEITHER!

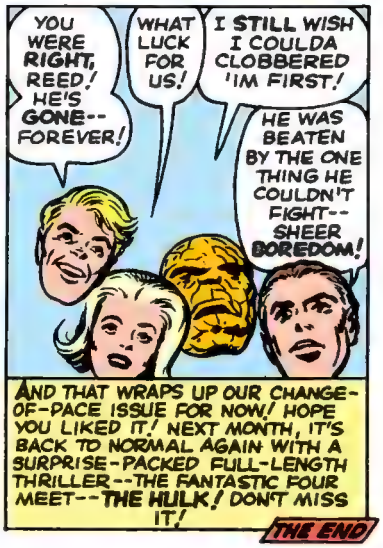

AND, IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, ALTHOUGH BEWILDERED BY HIS APPARENT SURRENDER, PEOPLE EVERYWHERE TAKE MR. FANTASTIC'S ADVICE...
THAT CREEPY PINHEAD IS RUININ' OUR WHOLE TV SHOW!
JUST LET HIM ALONE! THE WORD IS OUT FROM UPSTAIRS TO IGNORE THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN!
LOOK AT ME, FELLAS! LOOK WHAT I'M DOING!

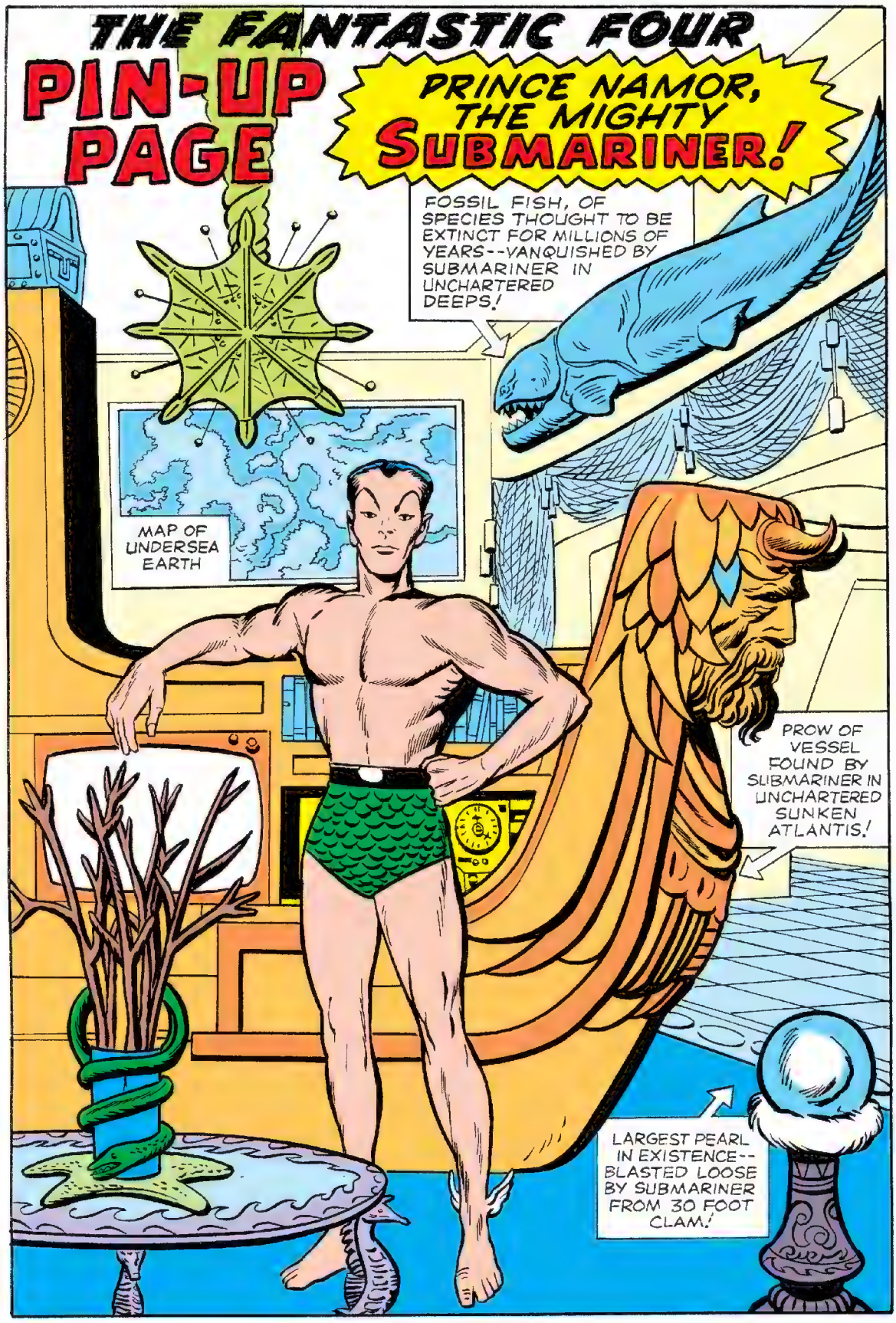

I STOLE THIS SILLY LITTLE AIRPLANE AND CRASHED IT RIGHT NEAR THOSE POLICE-MEN! WHY DON'T THEY TRY TO PUNISH ME?
WHAT'S NEW, MIKE?
NOTHIN' MUCH, JOE! IT'S BEEN A PRETTY QUIET DAY SO FAR!


C'MON, KILLER! NEVER MIND YOUR OPPONENT! TRY TO KNOCK ME OUT! PLEASE --TRY TO FIGHT ME!
IT'LL BE A NICE DAY TODAY IF IT DON'T RAIN, HUH?
YEAH, KILLER!

AND, NOT LONG AFTERWARDS...
LOOK! THERE HE IS! WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?
THE ONE THING I HOPED WOULD BE WRONG ...HE'S BORED SICK!
BAH! WHAT A BUNCH OF DEAD-HEADS ON THIS PLANET! AND I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA HAVE A LOT OF FUN! PHOOEY!
11

I'M GONNA FIND ME ANOTHER PLANET WHERE A FELLA CAN HAVE SOME FUN! EARTH IS TOO DULL! I'M NEVER GONNA COME BACK--AND I'LL TELL ALL THE OTHER POPPUPIANS TO STAY AWAY, TOO!
EARTH WILL NEVER GET OUR TOURIST BUSINESS! NO SIREE!
POP!


YOU WERE RIGHT, REED! HE'S GONE--FOREVER!
WHAT LUCK FOR US!
I STILL WISH I COULDA CLOBBERED 'IM FIRST!
HE WAS BEATEN BY THE ONE THING HE COULDN'T FIGHT--SHEER BOREDOM!
AND THAT WRAPS UP OUR CHANGE-OF-PACE ISSUE FOR NOW! HOPE YOU LIKED IT! NEXT MONTH, IT'S BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN WITH A SURPRISE-PACKED FULL-LENGTH THRILLER--THE FANTASTIC FOUR MEET--THE HULK! DON'T MISS IT!
THE END


THE FANTASTIC FOUR
PIN-UP PAGE
PRINCE NAMOR, THE MIGHTY SUBMARINER!
FOSSIL FISH, OF SPECIES THOUGHT TO BE EXTINCT FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS--VANQUISHED BY SUBMARINER IN UNCHARTERED DEEPS!
MAP OF UNDERSEA EARTH
PROW OF VESSEL FOUND BY SUBMARINER IN UNCHARTERED SUNKEN ATLANTIS!
LARGEST PEARL IN EXISTENCE--BLASTED LOOSE BY SUBMARINER FROM 30 FOOT CLAM!

IND.

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THE Fantastic Four

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AT LAST!!! the FANTASTIC FOUR meet THE HULK!

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A BOOK-LENGTH EPIC!! NEED WE SAY MORE?!!!

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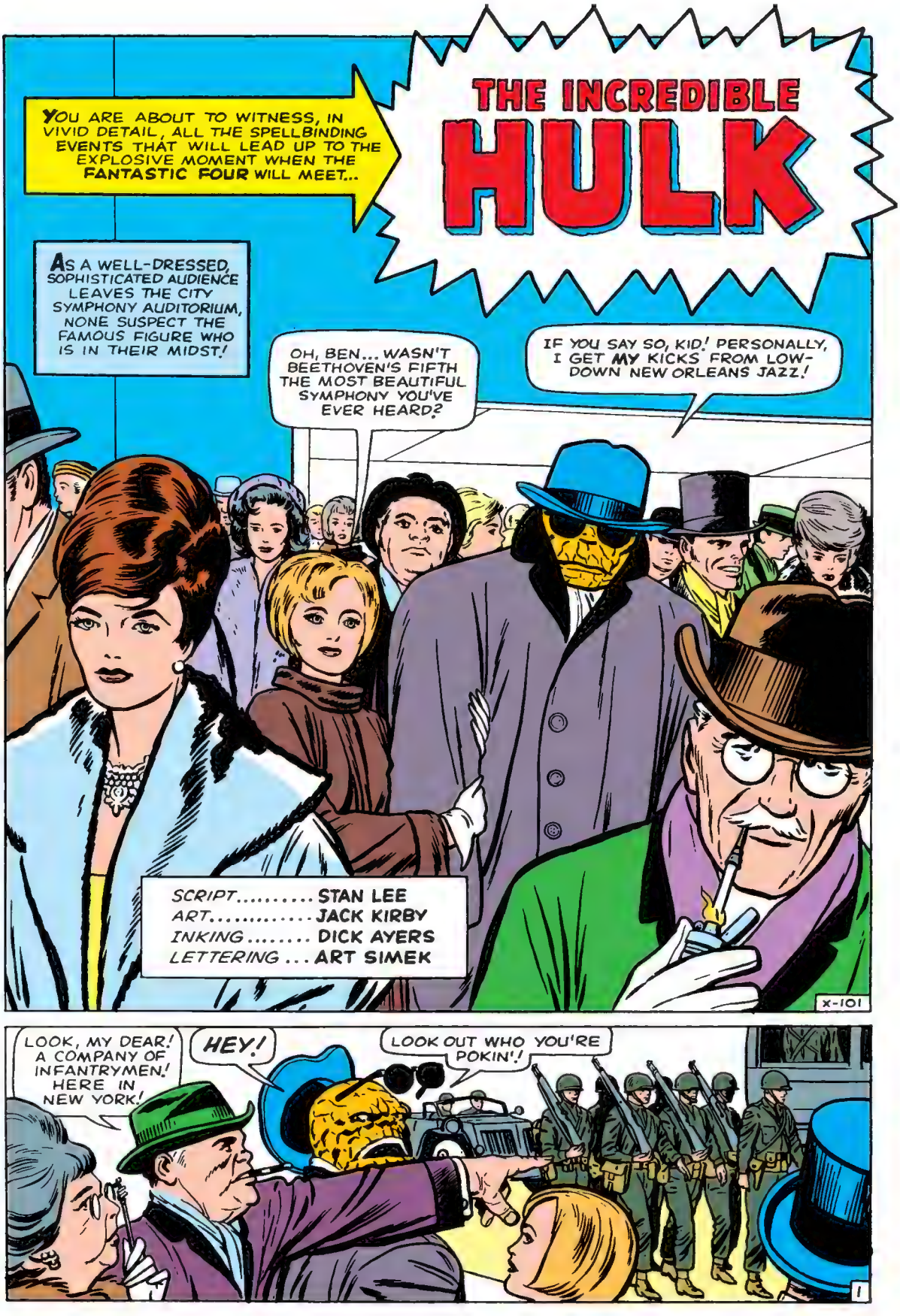
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS, IN VIVID DETAIL, ALL THE SPELLBINDING EVENTS THAT WILL LEAD UP TO THE EXPLOSIVE MOMENT WHEN THE FANTASTIC FOUR WILL MEET...
AS A WELL-DRESSED, SOPHISTICATED AUDIENCE LEAVES THE CITY SYMPHONY AUDITORIUM, NONE SUSPECT THE FAMOUS FIGURE WHO IS IN THEIR MIDST!
OH, BEN... WASN'T BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SYMPHONY YOU'VE EVER HEARD?
IF YOU SAY SO, KID! PERSONALLY, I GET MY KICKS FROM LOW-DOWN NEW ORLEANS JAZZ!
SCRIPT..... STAN LEE
ART..... JACK KIRBY
INKING..... DICK AYERS
LETTERING... ART SIMEK
X-101
LOOK, MY DEAR! A COMPANY OF INFANTRYMEN! HERE IN NEW YORK!
HEY!
LOOK OUT WHO YOU'RE POKIN'!
1

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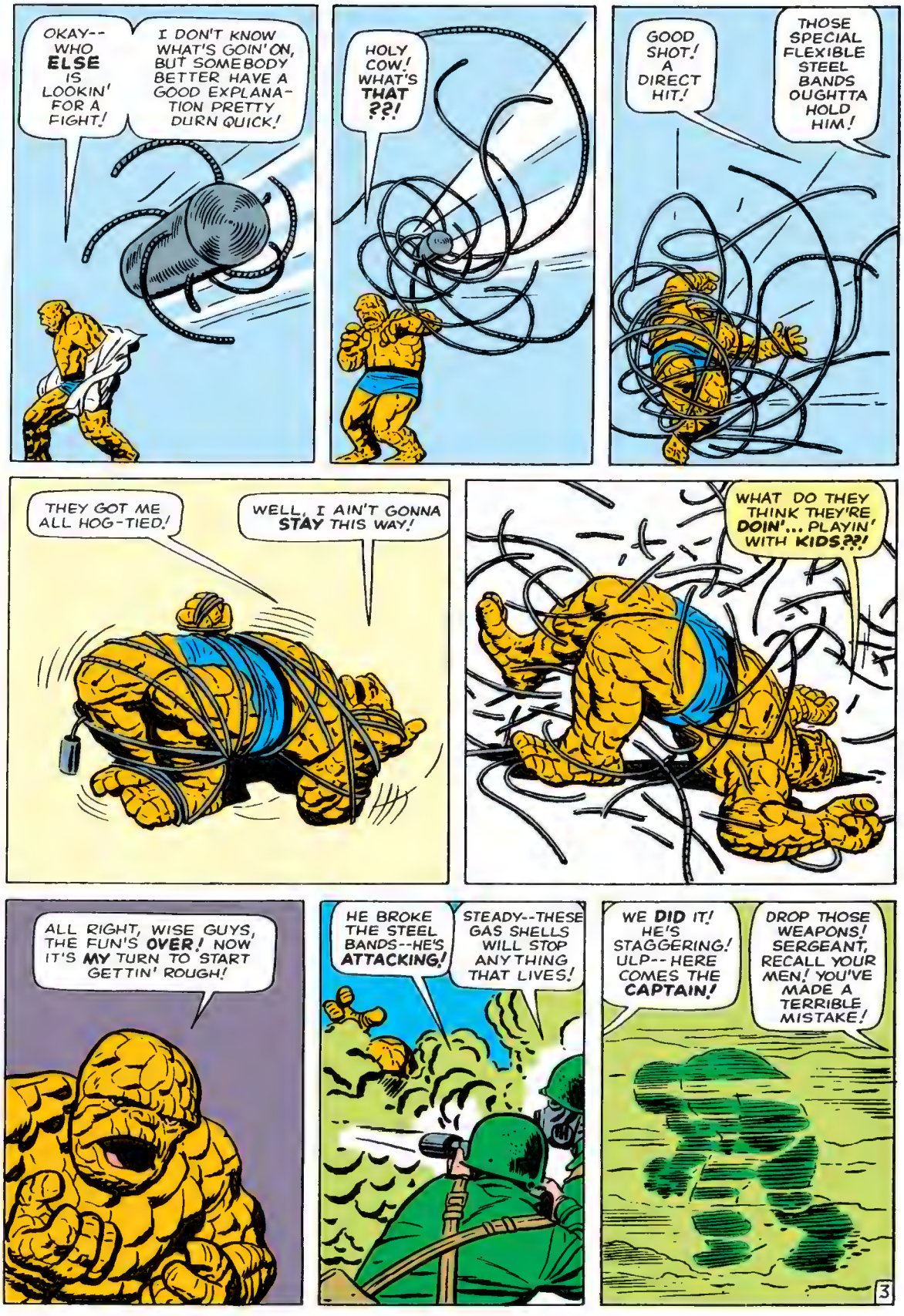
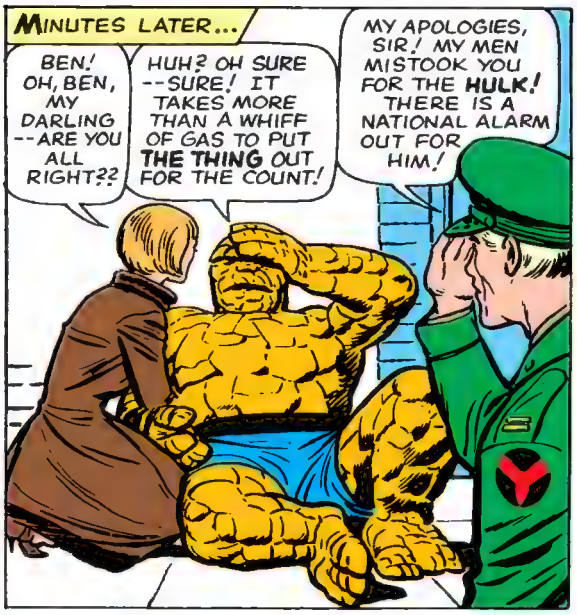
DON'T RAISE YOUR VOICE TO ME, MY GOOD MAN! I WAS MERELY TRYING TO SEE THOSE TROOPS, AND--ULP! A--A MONSTER!
OH, NOW YOU'RE INSULTIN' ME ALSO, HUH?
BEN--WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!!
HERE! YA WANNA SEE THE SOLDIER BOYS?? TAKE A GOOD LOOK!
DID YOU SEE THAT CHARACTER LIFT THAT GUY UP LIKE HE WAS A FEATHER ??
AND HE PUT HIM DOWN AGAIN GENTLE AS A LAMB!
HEY! HE'S STRONG ENOUGH TO BE THE ONE WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR!
SURROUND HIM!
DON'T LET 'IM GET AWAY!
BEN! WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
STAY BACK, ALICIA--I'LL HANDLE IT!
CAREFUL OF THE GIRL--IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S BLIND!
HOLY HANNAH! HE TORE THAT HYDRANT CLEAN OUT OF THE STREET!
ARE YOU GUYS ALL NUTS??!
LET'S RUSH 'IM!
BRUSHING HIS ATTACKER CARELESSLY ASIDE, THE MIGHTY THING HURLS HIMSELF UPON THE POWERFUL JET OF WATER, CAUSING IT TO SPRAY IN ALL DIRECTIONS WITH CONCENTRATED FORCE, SCATTERING THE NEARBY TROOPS!
MAYBE THIS'LL COOL YOU GUYS OFF!
QUICK! NAIL HIM WITH THAT SPECIALLY PREPARED BAZOOKA--POINT BLANK RANGE!
NOW! WHILE HE'S IN THE OPEN!


OKAY-- WHO ELSE IS LOOKIN' FOR A FIGHT!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON, BUT SOMEBODY BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXPLANATION PRETTY DURN QUICK!
HOLY COW! WHAT'S THAT ??!
GOOD SHOT! A DIRECT HIT!
THOSE SPECIAL FLEXIBLE STEEL BANDS OUGHTTA HOLD HIM!
THEY GOT ME ALL HOG-TIED!
WELL, I AIN'T GONNA STAY THIS WAY!
WHAT DO THEY THINK THEY'RE DOIN'... PLAYIN' WITH KIDS??!
ALL RIGHT, WISE GUYS, THE FUN'S OVER! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO START GETTIN' ROUGH!
HE BROKE THE STEEL BANDS--HE'S ATTACKING!
STEADY--THESE GAS SHELLS WILL STOP ANYTHING THAT LIVES!
WE DID IT! HE'S STAGGERING! ULP-- HERE COMES THE CAPTAIN!
DROP THOSE WEAPONS! SERGEANT, RECALL YOUR MEN! YOU'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE!
3

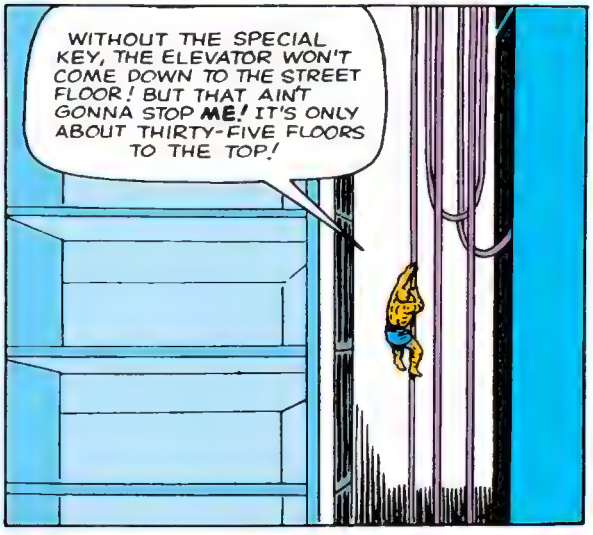

MINUTES LATER...
BEN! OH, BEN, MY DARLING --ARE YOU ALL RIGHT??
HUH? OH SURE --SURE! IT TAKES MORE THAN A WHIFF OF GAS TO PUT THE THING OUT FOR THE COUNT!
MY APOLOGIES, SIR! MY MEN MISTOOK YOU FOR THE HULK! THERE IS A NATIONAL ALARM OUT FOR HIM!

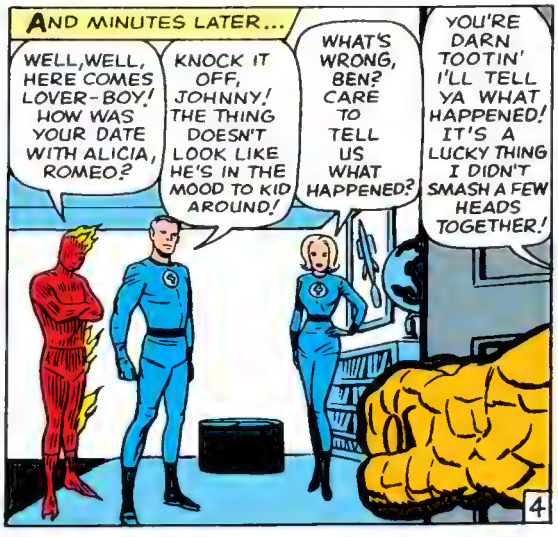
YOU TRYIN' TO TELL ME YOU THOUGHT THAT BRAINLESS LUMP OF LARD WAS ME??!! OF ALL THE CRUMMY...!
BEN, DON'T! HE'S TRYING TO APOLOGIZE! PLEASE, BEN!
C-CAN YOU CONTROL HIM, MA'AM? BETTER STAY BACK, MEN, TILL HE COOLS OFF!

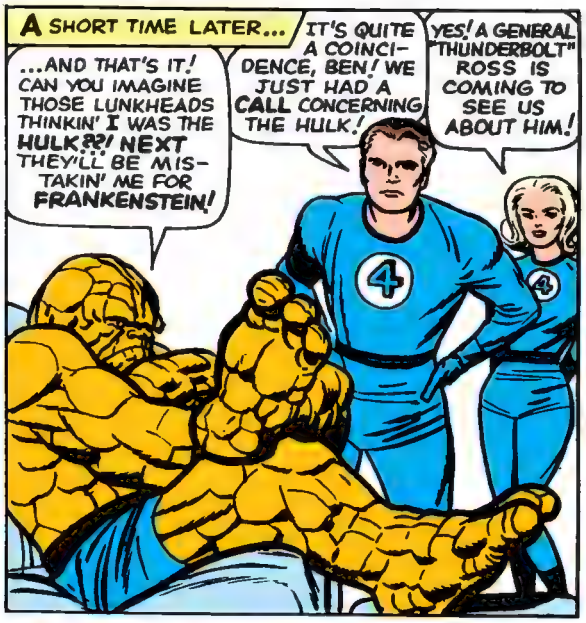
AS IF BEIN' THE THING AIN'T BAD ENOUGH, NOW THOSE LAMEBRAINS ARE MISTAKIN' ME FOR THE HULK! BAH! C'MON, KID, I'LL TAKE YOU HOME!

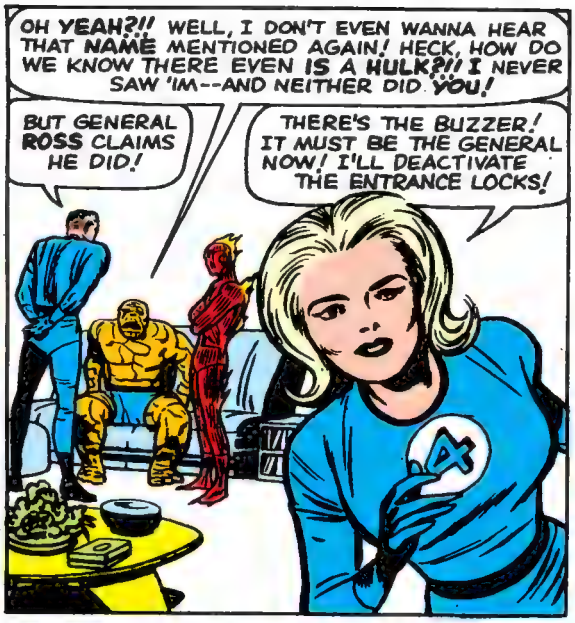
AFTER LEAVING ALICIA, AND REACHING THE LOBBY OF THE BAXTER BUILDING....
BLAST THE LUCK! I MUSTA DROPPED THE ELECTRONIC THINGAMAJIG THAT OPENS OUR SPECIAL ELEVATOR DOOR!

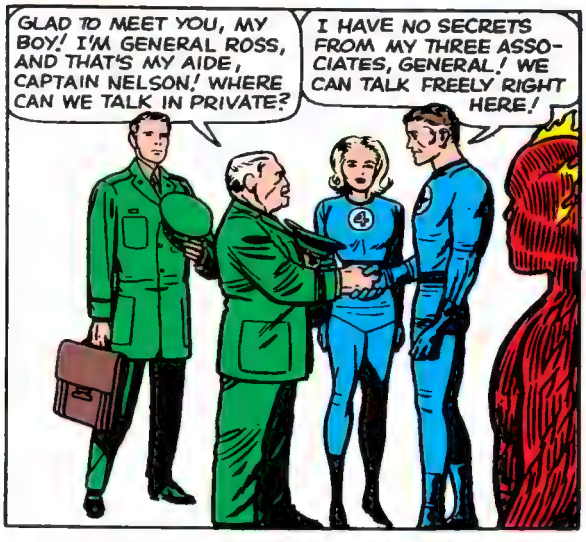
WELL, I AIN'T IN THE MOOD TO GO BACK AND LOOK FOR IT!
WE BEEN NEEDIN' A NEW DOOR, ANYWAY!

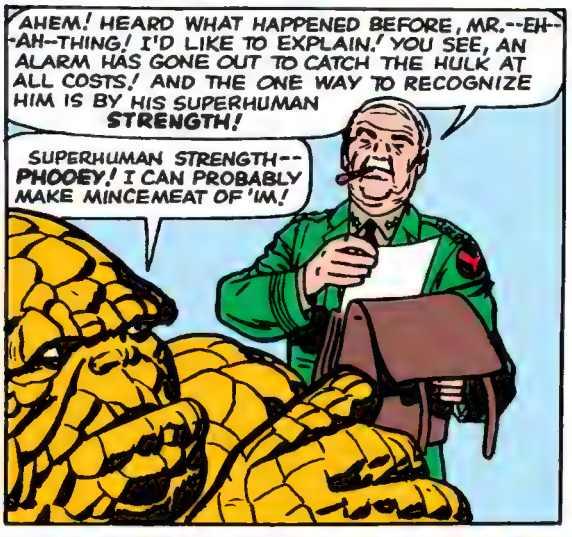

WITHOUT THE SPECIAL KEY, THE ELEVATOR WON'T COME DOWN TO THE STREET FLOOR! BUT THAT AIN'T GONNA STOP ME! IT'S ONLY ABOUT THIRTY-FIVE FLOORS TO THE TOP!


AND MINUTES LATER...
WELL,WELL, HERE COMES LOVER-BOY! HOW WAS YOUR DATE WITH ALICIA, ROMEO?
KNOCK IT OFF, JOHNNY! THE THING DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE'S IN THE MOOD TO KID AROUND!
WHAT'S WRONG, BEN? CARE TO TELL US WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN' I'LL TELL YA WHAT HAPPENED! IT'S A LUCKY THING I DIDN'T SMASH A FEW HEADS TOGETHER!


A SHORT TIME LATER...
...AND THAT'S IT! CAN YOU IMAGINE THOSE LUNKHEADS THINKIN' I WAS THE HULK?! NEXT THEY'LL BE MISTAKIN' ME FOR FRANKENSTEIN!
IT'S QUITE A COINCIDENCE, BEN! WE JUST HAD A CALL CONCERNING THE HULK!
YES! A GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS IS COMING TO SEE US ABOUT HIM!


OH YEAH?!! WELL, I DON'T EVEN WANNA HEAR THAT NAME MENTIONED AGAIN! HECK, HOW DO WE KNOW THERE EVEN IS A HULK?!! I NEVER SAW 'IM--AND NEITHER DID YOU!
BUT GENERAL ROSS CLAIMS HE DID!
THERE'S THE BUZZER! IT MUST BE THE GENERAL NOW! I'LL DEACTIVATE THE ENTRANCE LOCKS!


GLAD TO MEET YOU, MY BOY! I'M GENERAL ROSS, AND THAT'S MY AIDE, CAPTAIN NELSON! WHERE CAN WE TALK IN PRIVATE?
I HAVE NO SECRETS FROM MY THREE ASSOCIATES, GENERAL! WE CAN TALK FREELY RIGHT HERE!


AHEM! HEARD WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE, MR.--EH--AH--THING! I'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN! YOU SEE, AN ALARM HAS GONE OUT TO CATCH THE HULK AT ALL COSTS! AND THE ONE WAY TO RECOGNIZE HIM IS BY HIS SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH!
SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH--PHOOEY! I CAN PROBABLY MAKE MINCEMEAT OF 'IM!

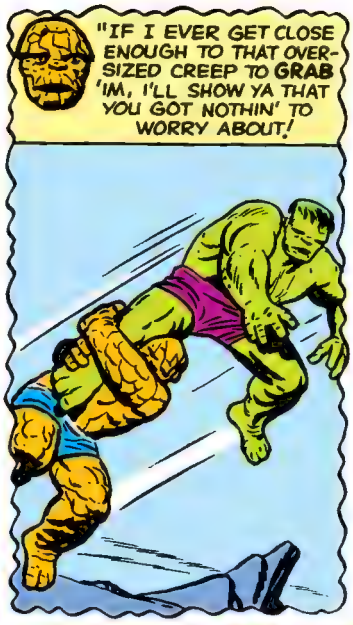
YOU MAY GET YOUR CHANCE TO PROVE THOSE WORDS! HERE IS A PICTURE OF THE HULK!
WELL, HE SURE AIN'T NO BEAUTY CONTEST WINNER!

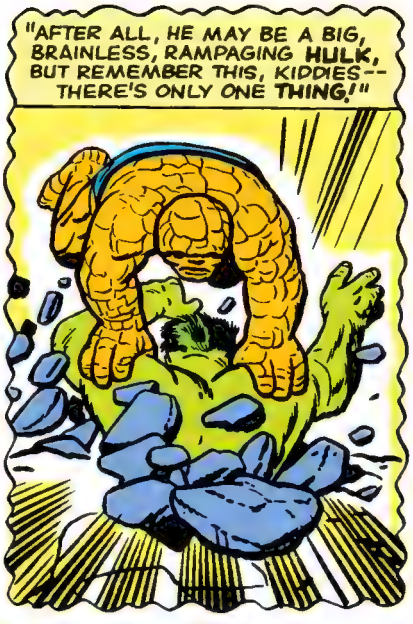
WHAT MAKES HIM NUMBER ONE ON YOUR HATE PARADE ALL OF A SUDDEN?
OUR MISSILE INSTALLATIONS IN THE DESERT HAVE BEEN SABOTAGED...AND HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT!
AND WHERE DO WE COME IN?

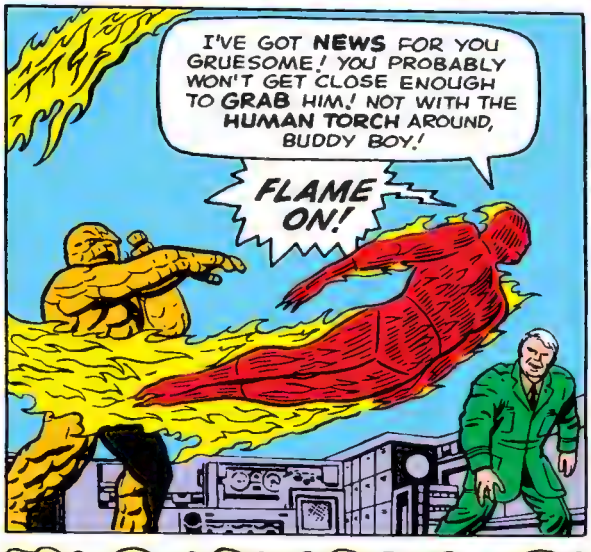
I'VE COME TO ENLIST YOUR HELP! I WANT YOU TO FIND AND DESTROY THE HULK!

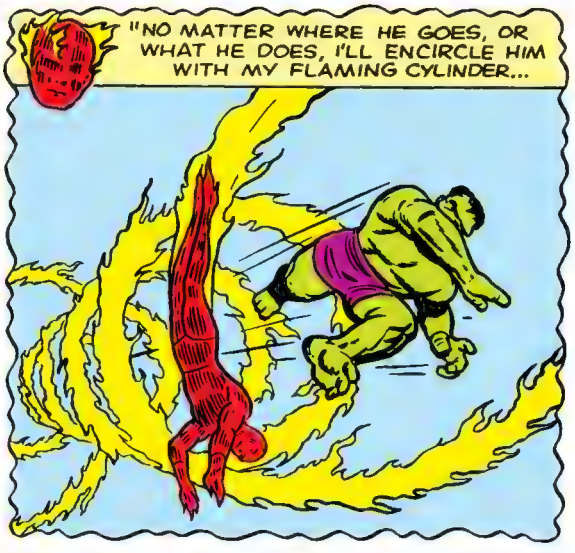
PART 2
MISSION: STOP THE HULK!
THESE ARE THE MOST RECENT RECORDED MOVING PICTURES OF THE HULK HIMSELF! THEY WERE TAKEN BY AN AUTOMATIC CAMERA PLACED IN THE SIGHTING DEVICE OF A SPECIAL CANNON!
WELL, I GUESS WE'RE LOOKING AT PROOF POSITIVE THAT HE DOES EXIST!
AND THIS IS THE CANNON, THREE SECONDS LATER, AFTER THE HULK FINISHED HIS SAVAGE ONSLAUGHT! ONLY THE FILM CARTRIDGE REMAINED INTACT!
HOLD IT, SIR! SUE! WHERE IS SHE?
RIGHT HERE, REED! FORGIVE ME! THE--THE SIGHT OF THAT MONSTER UNNERVED ME SO THAT I LOST CONTROL OF MY VISIBILITY POWER!
6

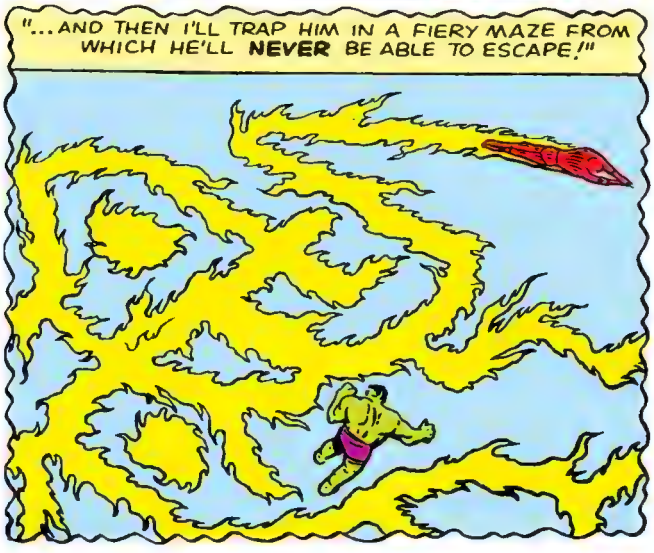
HE-HE WAS THE MOST TERRIFYING-LOOKING CREATURE I'VE EVER SEEN!
HECK! SEEMS TO ME I OUGHTTA BE INSULTED! YOU'VE SEEN ME, HAVEN'T YOU?? WHAT AM I-- A PANTY-WAIST!?


"IF I EVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO THAT OVER-SIZED CREEP TO GRAB 'IM, I'LL SHOW YA THAT YOU GOT NOTHIN' TO WORRY ABOUT!


"AFTER ALL, HE MAY BE A BIG, BRAINLESS, RAMPAGING HULK, BUT REMEMBER THIS, KIDDIES-- THERE'S ONLY ONE THING!"


I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU GRUESOME! YOU PROBABLY WON'T GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO GRAB HIM! NOT WITH THE HUMAN TORCH AROUND, BUDDY BOY!
FLAME ON!


"NO MATTER WHERE HE GOES, OR WHAT HE DOES, I'LL ENCIRCLE HIM WITH MY FLAMING CYLINDER...


"...AND THEN I'LL TRAP HIM IN A FIERY MAZE FROM WHICH HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO ESCAPE!"

GLAD TO HEAR SUCH ENTHUSIASM, BOYS! BUT DON'T FORGET THAT MR. FANTASTIC WILL BE THERE, TOO! AND I'M NOT EXACTLY WITHOUT SUPER POWERS MYSELF!

"IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT **THE HULK** ELUDES THE REST OF YOU, THERE IS **ONE** STUNT I'VE BEEN WAITING TO TRY-- I WOULD FLATTEN MY BODY AGAINST THE CEILING OF A SPECIALLY PREPARED ROOM, AND WAIT FOR HIM TO ENTER--

"--AND WHEN HE **DOES**, THAT'S **ALL**, FOLKS!"

WHUMP!

LOOKS AS THOUGH **I'LL** JUST BE GOING ALONG FOR THE RIDE! I'M NOT SURE HOW **I** CAN HELP!

HARRUMMPH! MISS STORM, A PRETTY YOUNG LADY CAN **ALWAYS** BE OF HELP--JUST BY KEEPING THE MEN'S **MORALE** UP!

THAT'S JUST THE WAY **WE** FEEL ABOUT SUE, GENERAL!

SUDDENLY--

LOOK OUT BELOW! I'M **FALLING!**

OH, JOHNNY-- YOU FORGOT THAT YOU MUSTN'T KEEP YOUR FLAME ON **TOO LONG!**

RELAX, RELAX! I GOT 'IM!

DON'T YOU THINK THAT THE **HUMAN TORCH** MIGHT BE A LITTLE TOO **YOUNG** FOR SUCH A DANGEROUS MISSION, MR. FANTASTIC?

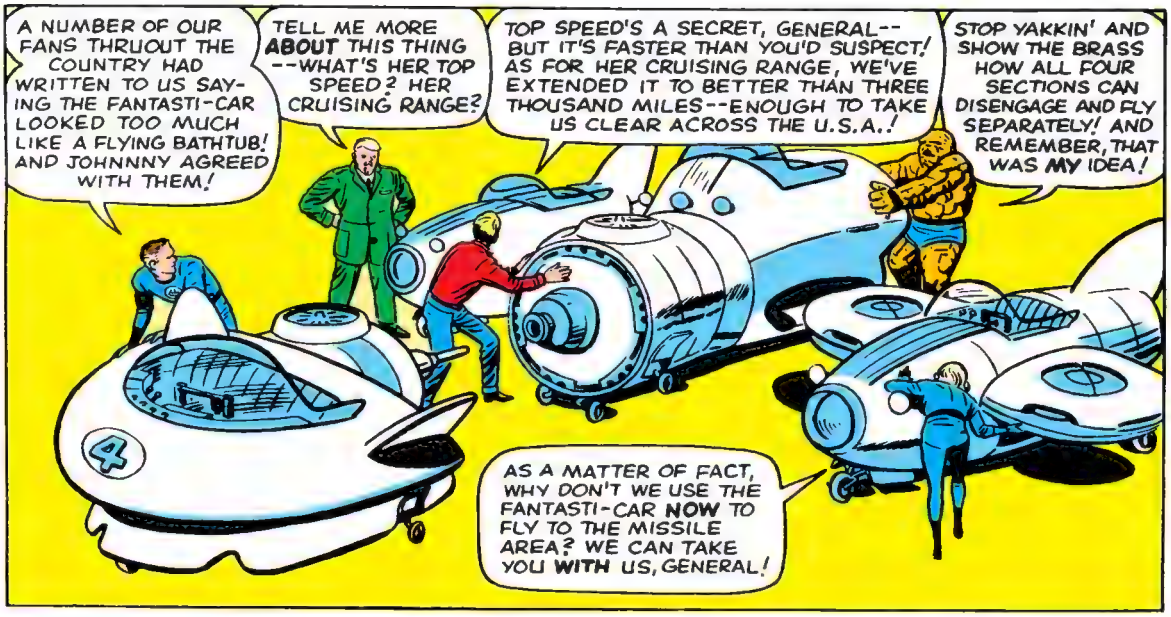
WHO, **HIM?** DON'T LET HIS AGE **FOOL** YOU, SIR! THAT FLAME OF HIS IS ONE OF OUR MOST POTENT WEAPONS -- AS WELL AS HIS MECHANICAL SKILL! IN FACT, I'LL GIVE YOU A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION!

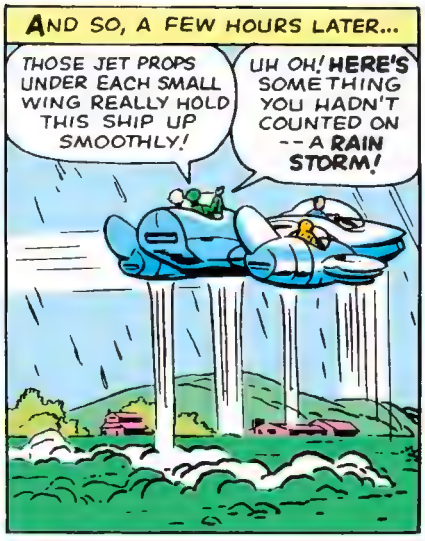
YOU TELL 'IM, BIG DADDY!

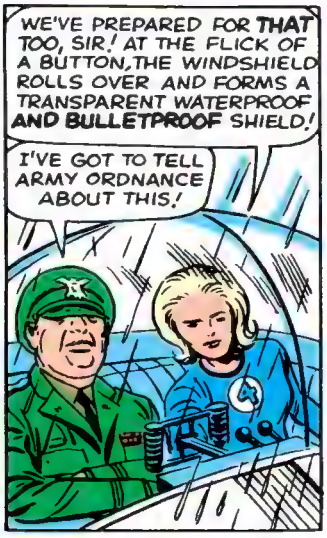
JOHNNY HAS JUST FINISHED MODIFYING OUR **FANTASTI-CAR!** HERE -- I'LL GIVE YOU A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION!

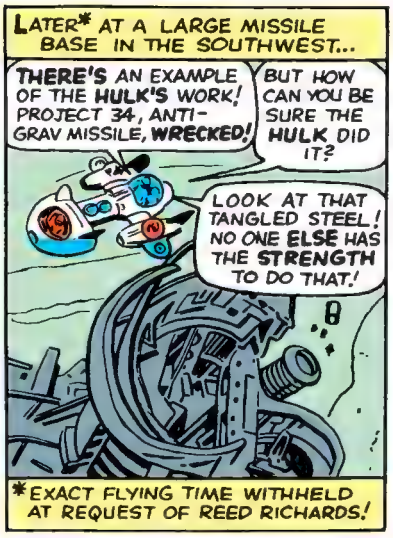
HMMM -- VERY IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING!

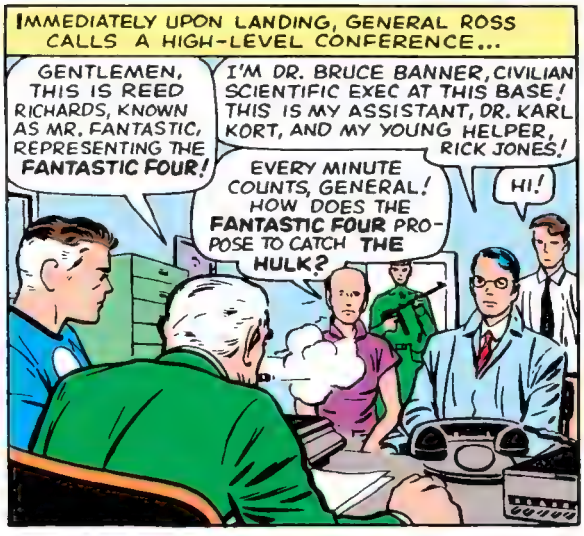
I **STILL** SAY THEY DON'T BUILD 'EM LIKE THEY **USED** TO!

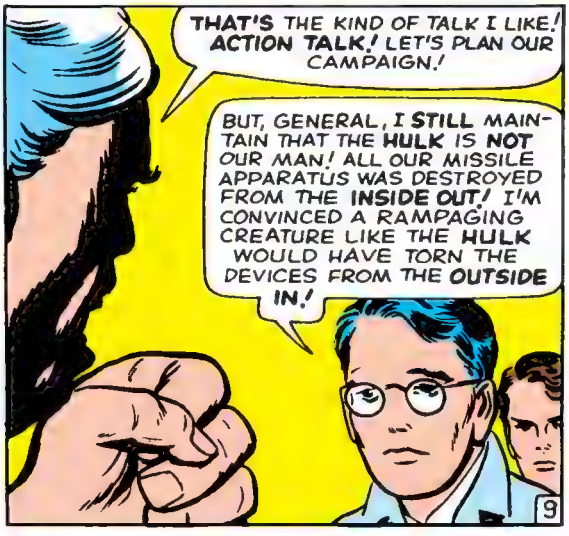

A NUMBER OF OUR FANS THRUOUT THE COUNTRY HAD WRITTEN TO US SAYING THE FANTASTI-CAR LOOKED TOO MUCH LIKE A FLYING BATHTUB! AND JOHNNNY AGREED WITH THEM!
TELL ME MORE **ABOUT** THIS THING --WHAT'S HER TOP SPEED? HER CRUISING RANGE?
TOP SPEED'S A SECRET, GENERAL-- BUT IT'S FASTER THAN YOU'D SUSPECT! AS FOR HER CRUISING RANGE, WE'VE EXTENDED IT TO BETTER THAN THREE THOUSAND MILES--ENOUGH TO TAKE US CLEAR ACROSS THE U.S.A.!
STOP YAKKIN' AND SHOW THE BRASS HOW ALL FOUR SECTIONS CAN DISENGAGE AND FLY SEPARATELY! AND REMEMBER, THAT WAS **MY** IDEA!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, WHY DON'T WE USE THE FANTASTI-CAR **NOW** TO FLY TO THE MISSILE AREA? WE CAN TAKE YOU **WITH** US, GENERAL!

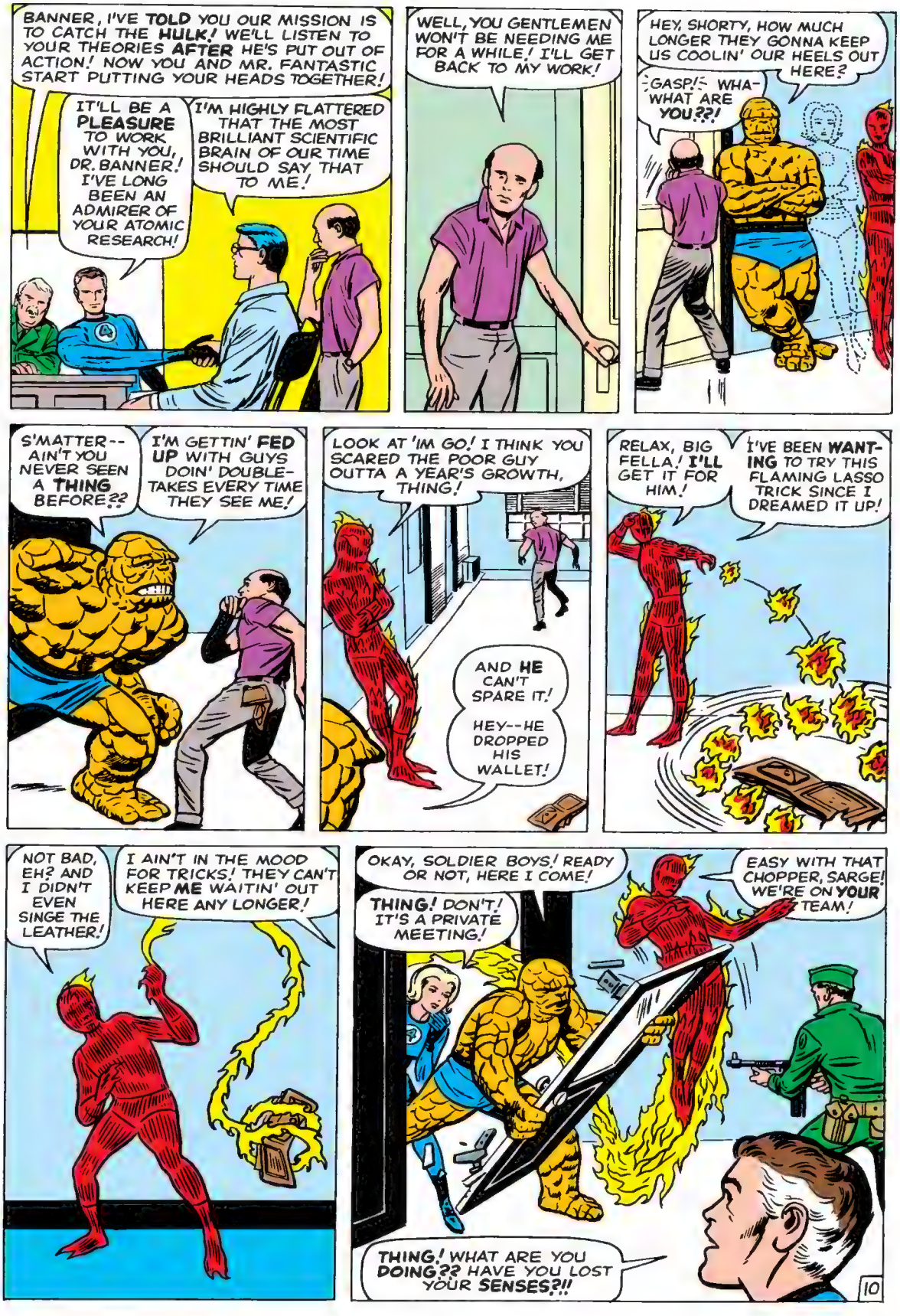

AND SO, A FEW HOURS LATER...
THOSE JET PROPS UNDER EACH SMALL WING REALLY HOLD THIS SHIP UP SMOOTHLY!
UH OH! **HERE'S** SOMETHING YOU HADN'T COUNTED ON --A **RAIN STORM!**


WE'VE PREPARED FOR **THAT** TOO, SIR! AT THE FLICK OF A BUTTON, THE WINDSHIELD ROLLS OVER AND FORMS A TRANSPARENT WATERPROOF **AND BULLETPROOF** SHIELD!
I'VE GOT TO TELL ARMY ORDNANCE ABOUT THIS!


LATER* AT A LARGE MISSILE BASE IN THE SOUTHWEST...
THERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF THE **HULK'S** WORK! PROJECT 34, ANTI-GRAV MISSILE, **WRECKED!**
BUT HOW CAN YOU BE SURE THE **HULK** DID IT?
LOOK AT THAT TANGLED STEEL! NO ONE **ELSE** HAS THE **STRENGTH** TO DO THAT!
*EXACT FLYING TIME WITHHELD AT REQUEST OF REED RICHARDS!

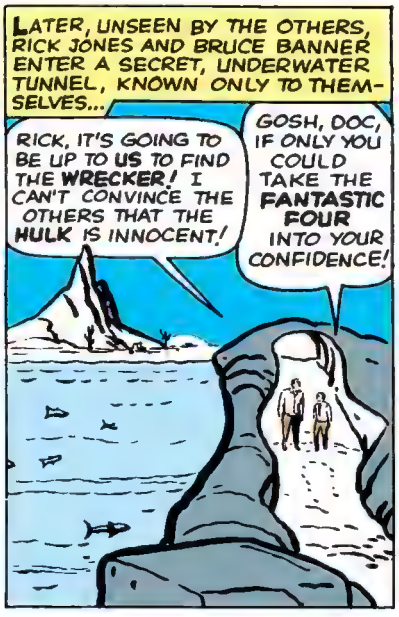

IMMEDIATELY UPON LANDING, GENERAL ROSS CALLS A HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE...
GENTLEMEN, THIS IS REED RICHARDS, KNOWN AS MR. FANTASTIC, REPRESENTING THE **FANTASTIC FOUR!**
I'M DR. BRUCE BANNER, CIVILIAN SCIENTIFIC EXEC AT THIS BASE! THIS IS MY ASSISTANT, DR. KARL KORT, AND MY YOUNG HELPER, RICK JONES!
HI!
EVERY MINUTE COUNTS, GENERAL! HOW DOES THE **FANTASTIC FOUR** PROPOSE TO CATCH **THE HULK?**

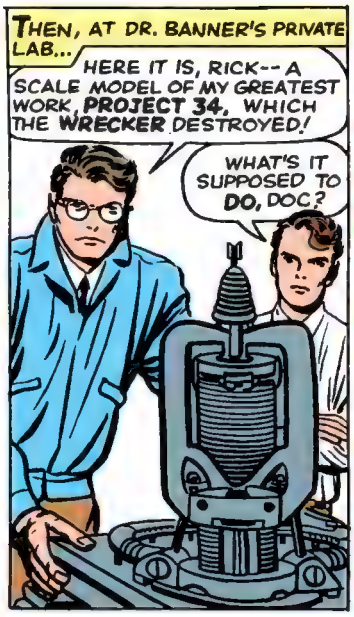

THAT'S THE KIND OF TALK I LIKE! **ACTION TALK!** LET'S PLAN OUR CAMPAIGN!
BUT, GENERAL, I **STILL** MAINTAIN THAT THE **HULK** IS **NOT** OUR MAN! ALL OUR MISSILE APPARATUS WAS DESTROYED FROM THE **INSIDE OUT!** I'M CONVINCED A RAMPAGING CREATURE LIKE THE **HULK** WOULD HAVE TORN THE DEVICES FROM THE **OUTSIDE IN!**


BANNER, I'VE TOLD YOU OUR MISSION IS TO CATCH THE HULK! WE'LL LISTEN TO YOUR THEORIES AFTER HE'S PUT OUT OF ACTION! NOW YOU AND MR. FANTASTIC START PUTTING YOUR HEADS TOGETHER!
IT'LL BE A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH YOU, DR. BANNER! I'VE LONG BEEN AN ADMIRER OF YOUR ATOMIC RESEARCH!
I'M HIGHLY FLATTERED THAT THE MOST BRILLIANT SCIENTIFIC BRAIN OF OUR TIME SHOULD SAY THAT TO ME!
WELL, YOU GENTLEMEN WON'T BE NEEDING ME FOR A WHILE! I'LL GET BACK TO MY WORK!
HEY, SHORTY, HOW MUCH LONGER THEY GONNA KEEP US COOLIN' OUR HEELS OUT HERE?
GASP!- WHA- WHAT ARE YOU??!
S'MATTER-- AIN'T YOU NEVER SEEN A THING BEFORE??
I'M GETTIN' FED UP WITH GUYS DOIN' DOUBLE-TAKES EVERY TIME THEY SEE ME!
LOOK AT 'IM GO! I THINK YOU SCARED THE POOR GUY OUTTA A YEAR'S GROWTH, THING!
AND HE CAN'T SPARE IT!
HEY--HE DROPPED HIS WALLET!
RELAX, BIG FELLA! I'LL GET IT FOR HIM!
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TRY THIS FLAMING LASSO TRICK SINCE I DREAMED IT UP!
NOT BAD, EH? AND I DIDN'T EVEN SINGE THE LEATHER!
I AIN'T IN THE MOOD FOR TRICKS! THEY CAN'T KEEP ME WAITIN' OUT HERE ANY LONGER!
OKAY, SOLDIER BOYS! READY OR NOT, HERE I COME!
THING! DON'T! IT'S A PRIVATE MEETING!
EASY WITH THAT CHOPPER, SARGE! WE'RE ON YOUR TEAM!
THING! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?? HAVE YOU LOST YOUR SENSES?!!
10

PART 3
WHO IS THE WRECKER?
OF ALL THE BLANKETTY-BLANK--!! WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?! ATTENTION, ALL OF YOU! THAT'S AN ORDER!
DON'T BE ALARMED, SIR! I'LL QUIET THEM DOWN! LET ME HANDLE THIS!
WHEEE! ABOUT TIME WE HAD A LITTLE ACTION!
WE'RE THE FANTASTIC FOUR, NOT THE FANTASTIC ONE! I DON'T LIKE BEIN' KEPT ON THE OUTSIDE!
GIVE ME THAT GUN BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT!
A VOICE FROM NOWHERE! THE PLACE IS HAUNTED!
SECONDS LATER, AFTER THE EXCITEMENT SUBSIDES...
IF YOU WEREN'T CIVILIANS, I'D THROW YOU ALL IN THE GUARDHOUSE!
EASY, SIR! THEY DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM! THEY'RE HERE TO HELP US, REMEMBER?
HE'S DANG-TOOTIN' RIGHT, SOLDIER BOY! IF WE TAKE OFF, WHO'LL GET THAT HULK JOKER FOR YA??!
SO FAR, MY LOUD-MOUTHED FRIEND, YOU'VE DONE NOTHING BUT TALK! LOOKS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE HULK!
11

AFRAID OF THE HULK, AM I ??
I'LL SHOW YA WHO'S AFRAID OF WHAT!!!
THIS IS WHAT I'LL DO TO THAT OVERSIZED CRUMB-BUM WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON 'IM!
RRRRRRIIP!
OH NO! THE BIG APE RUINED MY BOUND SET OF TELEPHONE BOOKS! OF ALL THE--!!!
EASY, GENERAL! WE'LL REIMBURSE YOU FOR THEM! BUT YOU'VE GOT TO WATCH WHAT YOU SAY TO THE THING!
A FINE KETTLE OF FISH THIS IS! I'VE HIRED MYSELF A BUNCH OF BLASTED PRIMA DONNAS!
MR. FANTASTIC, ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP YOU FIND THE WRECKER, LET ME KNOW!
THE WRECKER?
THAT'S OUR NAME FOR THE SABOTEUR!
STRANGE--DR. BANNER AND RICK SEEM SO SURE THAT THE HULK ISN'T THE GUILTY ONE!
TOO BAD WE CAN'T TELL THEM WHY WE'RE SO SURE THE HULK IS INNOCENT, EH, RICK?
YES, DOC!
HEY, RICK--I'VE GOT A WALLET FOR YOU TO RETURN TO SOMEONE!
WATCH WHAT YOU'RE DOIN', TORCH!
HAH! FOOLED YOU, HUH? YOU THOUGHT YOU'D BURN YOURSELF --BUT I DOUSED THE FLAME IN MY HANDS!
BOY! YOU'RE JUST A BARREL OF LAUGHS, AIN'T YA?
DON'T BLAME YOU FOR BEIN' IMPRESSED, SON!
LOOK AT HIM GREEN WITH ENVY! TRYIN' NOT TO ADMIT HE'S OVERWHELMED BY ME!
HE WOULDN'T BE SO SWELL-HEADED IF HE KNEW I WAS THE HULK'S PARTNER!

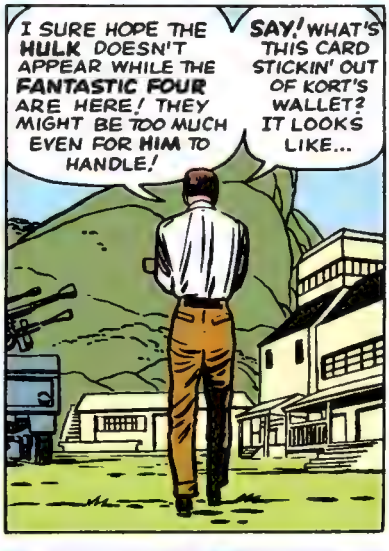

LATER, UNSEEN BY THE OTHERS, RICK JONES AND BRUCE BANNER ENTER A SECRET, UNDERWATER TUNNEL, KNOWN ONLY TO THEMSELVES...
RICK, IT'S GOING TO BE UP TO US TO FIND THE WRECKER! I CAN'T CONVINCE THE OTHERS THAT THE HULK IS INNOCENT!
GOSH, DOC, IF ONLY YOU COULD TAKE THE FANTASTIC FOUR INTO YOUR CONFIDENCE!


THEN, AT DR. BANNER'S PRIVATE LAB...
HERE IT IS, RICK--A SCALE MODEL OF MY GREATEST WORK, PROJECT 34, WHICH THE WRECKER DESTROYED!
WHAT'S IT SUPPOSED TO DO, DOC?

"PLACED IN THE CENTER OF A CITY, IT WOULD EMIT ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES, BLANKETING THE AREA...

"...MAKING ANY U.S. CITY COMPLETELY INVULNERABLE TO ENEMY MISSILES OR ROCKETS! ONCE I PERFECT IT, IT WILL BE THE PERFECT DEFENSE IN A NUCLEAR AGE!"

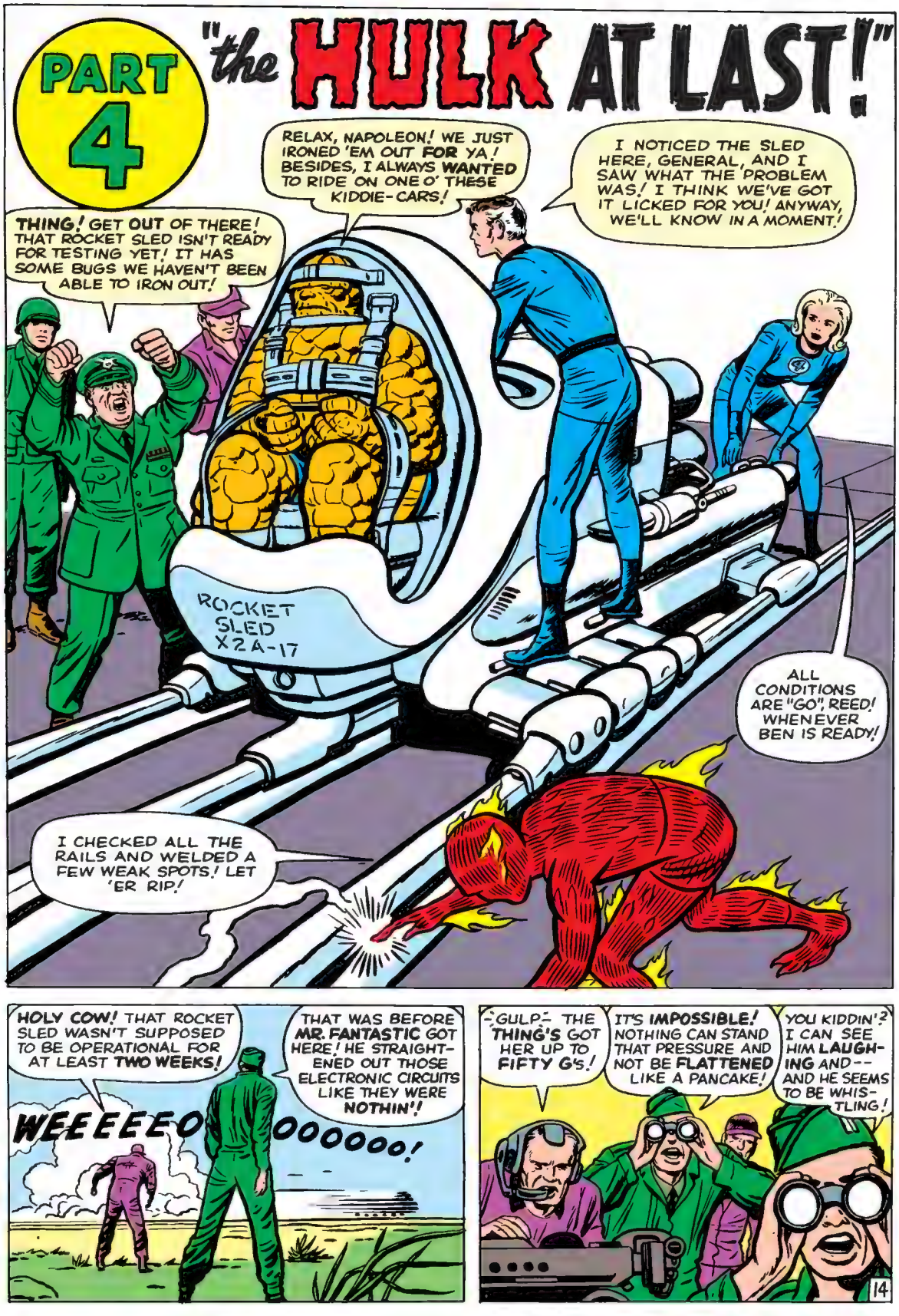
BUT THE WRECKER, WHOEVER HE IS, IS TRYING TO STOP MY WORK! AND HE HAS CLEVERLY MANAGED TO MAKE GENERAL ROSS THINK THE HULK IS BEHIND THE SABOTAGE!
BY THE WAY, THE TORCH GAVE ME THIS WALLET TO RETURN TO KARL KORT! I'LL TAKE IT TO HIM!

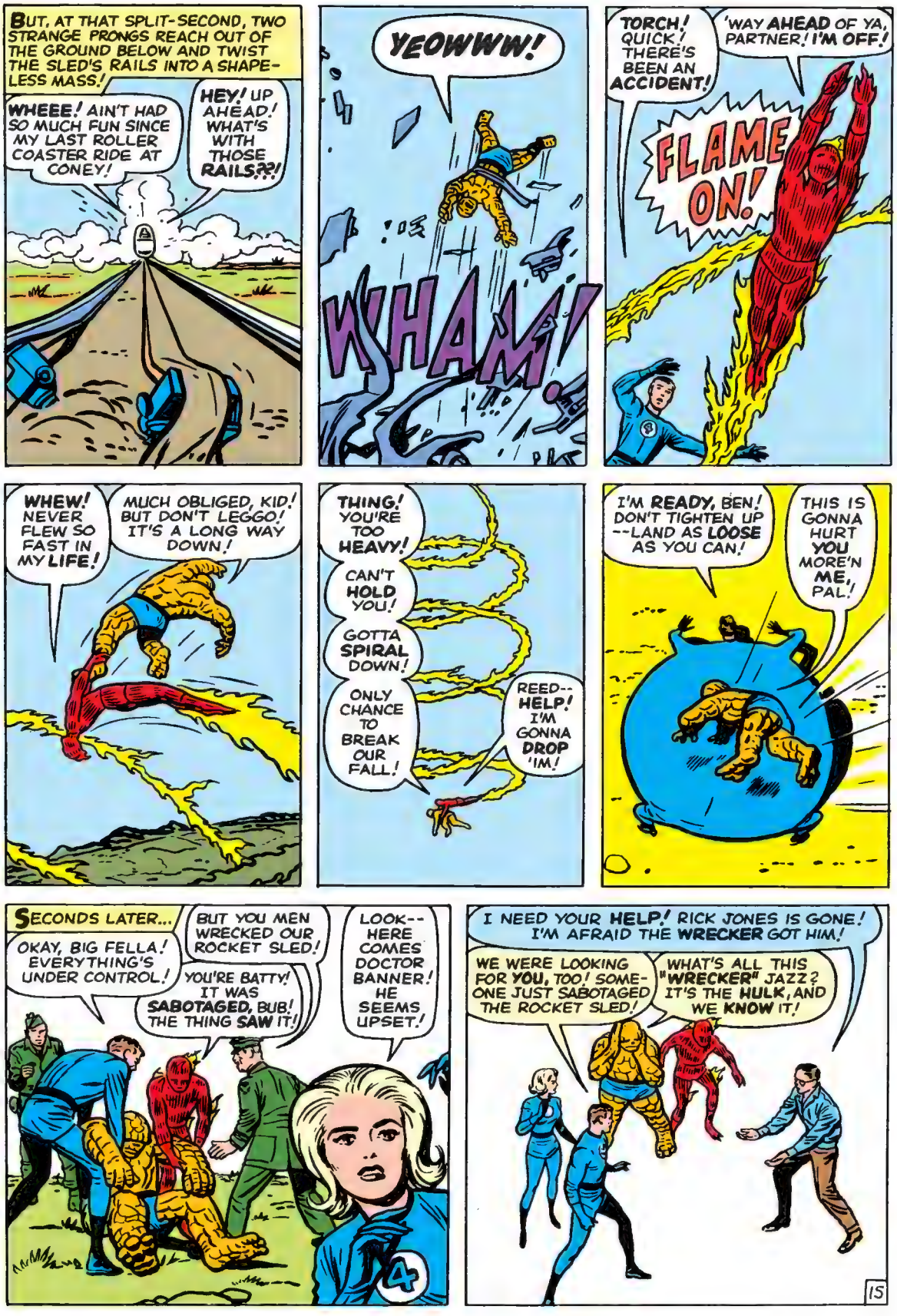

I SURE HOPE THE HULK DOESN'T APPEAR WHILE THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE HERE! THEY MIGHT BE TOO MUCH EVEN FOR HIM TO HANDLE!
SAY! WHAT'S THIS CARD STICKIN' OUT OF KORT'S WALLET? IT LOOKS LIKE...

IT IS! IT'S A MEMBERSHIP CARD IN A SUBVERSIVE COMMUNIST-FRONT ORGANIZATION!
THAT MEANS--KARL KORT MUST BE--A RED!

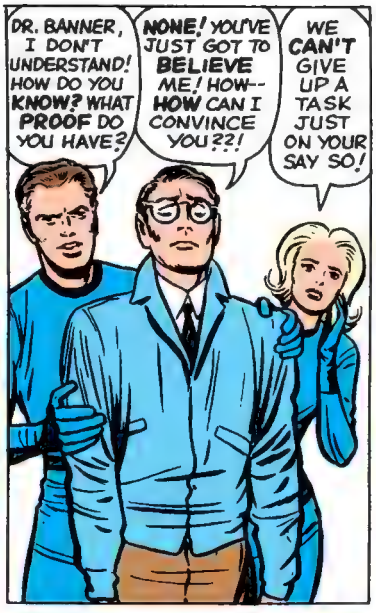
I'VE GOTTA TELL THE HULK! HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO--
YOU'RE NOT TELLING ANYONE, YOU LITTLE SNOOP!

SO YOU'RE IN LEAGUE WITH THE HULK, ARE YOU?? WELL, WELL! NOW I'LL BE ABLE TO DESTROY HIM AS WELL AS BANNER'S PROJECT 34!
YOU--YOU'RE THE WRECKER!

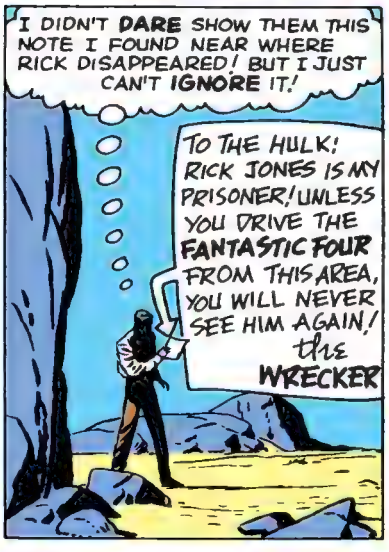

PART 4
"the HULK AT LAST!"
RELAX, NAPOLEON! WE JUST IRONED 'EM OUT FOR YA! BESIDES, I ALWAYS WANTED TO RIDE ON ONE O' THESE KIDDIE-CARS!
I NOTICED THE SLED HERE, GENERAL, AND I SAW WHAT THE PROBLEM WAS! I THINK WE'VE GOT IT LICKED FOR YOU! ANYWAY, WE'LL KNOW IN A MOMENT!
THING! GET OUT OF THERE! THAT ROCKET SLED ISN'T READY FOR TESTING YET! IT HAS SOME BUGS WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO IRON OUT!
ROCKET SLED X2A-17
ALL CONDITIONS ARE "GO", REED! WHENEVER BEN IS READY!
I CHECKED ALL THE RAILS AND WELDED A FEW WEAK SPOTS! LET 'ER RIP!
HOLY COW! THAT ROCKET SLED WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE OPERATIONAL FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS!
THAT WAS BEFORE MR. FANTASTIC GOT HERE! HE STRAIGHTENED OUT THOSE ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS LIKE THEY WERE NOTHIN'!
WEEEEEOOOOOOO!
-GULP!- THE THING'S GOT HER UP TO FIFTY G's!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NOTHING CAN STAND THAT PRESSURE AND NOT BE FLATTENED LIKE A PANCAKE!
YOU KIDDIN'? I CAN SEE HIM LAUGHING AND-- AND HE SEEMS TO BE WHISTLING!
14

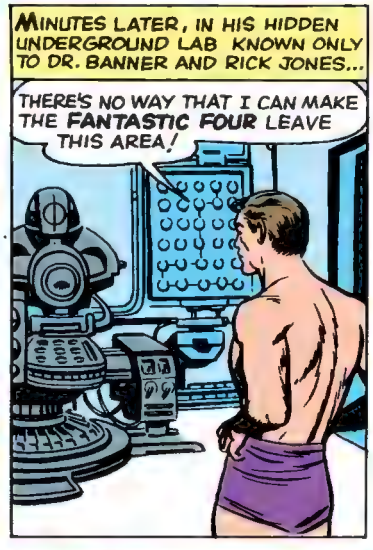

BUT, AT THAT SPLIT-SECOND, TWO STRANGE PRONGS REACH OUT OF THE GROUND BELOW AND TWIST THE SLED'S RAILS INTO A SHAPELESS MASS!
WHEEE! AIN'T HAD SO MUCH FUN SINCE MY LAST ROLLER COASTER RIDE AT CONEY!
HEY! UP AHEAD! WHAT'S WITH THOSE RAILS?!?!
YEOWWW!
WHAM!
TORCH! QUICK! THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT!
'WAY AHEAD OF YA, PARTNER! I'M OFF!
FLAME ON!
WHEW! NEVER FLEW SO FAST IN MY LIFE!
MUCH OBLIGED, KID! BUT DON'T LEGGO! IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN!
THING! YOU'RE TOO HEAVY!
CAN'T HOLD YOU!
GOTTA SPIRAL DOWN!
ONLY CHANCE TO BREAK OUR FALL!
REED--HELP! I'M GONNA DROP 'IM!
I'M READY, BEN! DON'T TIGHTEN UP --LAND AS LOOSE AS YOU CAN!
THIS IS GONNA HURT YOU MORE'N ME, PAL!
SECONDS LATER...
OKAY, BIG FELLA! EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL!
BUT YOU MEN WRECKED OUR ROCKET SLED!
YOU'RE BATTY! IT WAS SABOTAGED, BUB! THE THING SAW IT!
LOOK--HERE COMES DOCTOR BANNER! HE SEEMS UPSET!
I NEED YOUR HELP! RICK JONES IS GONE! I'M AFRAID THE WRECKER GOT HIM!
WE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU, TOO! SOMEONE JUST SABOTAGED THE ROCKET SLED!
WHAT'S ALL THIS "WRECKER" JAZZ? IT'S THE HULK, AND WE KNOW IT!
15

NO ONE BUT THAT BLASTED HULK COULDA BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO TWIST THOSE ROCKET SLED TRACKS! AND WHEN I GET AHOLD OF HIM...!
NO! IT ISN'T THE HULK, IT'S THE WRECKER! AND IF YOU DON'T GIVE UP THE CASE, HE'LL HARM RICK!


DR. BANNER, I DON'T UNDERSTAND! HOW DO YOU KNOW? WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE?
NONE! YOU'VE JUST GOT TO BELIEVE ME! HOW-- HOW CAN I CONVINCE YOU??!
WE CAN'T GIVE UP A TASK JUST ON YOUR SAY SO!

WAIT! I KNOW YOU HAVE MORE TO TELL US! WHY WON'T YOU SPEAK? WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?
IT'S NO USE! HOW CAN I EXPECT THEM TO BELIEVE ME, WHEN I CAN'T TELL THEM THE WHOLE TRUTH??
Y'KNOW SOMETHIN'? I DON'T TRUST THAT GUY!
ME NEITHER!


I DIDN'T DARE SHOW THEM THIS NOTE I FOUND NEAR WHERE RICK DISAPPEARED! BUT I JUST CAN'T IGNORE IT!
TO THE HULK! RICK JONES IS MY PRISONER! UNLESS YOU DRIVE THE FANTASTIC FOUR FROM THIS AREA, YOU WILL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN! the WRECKER

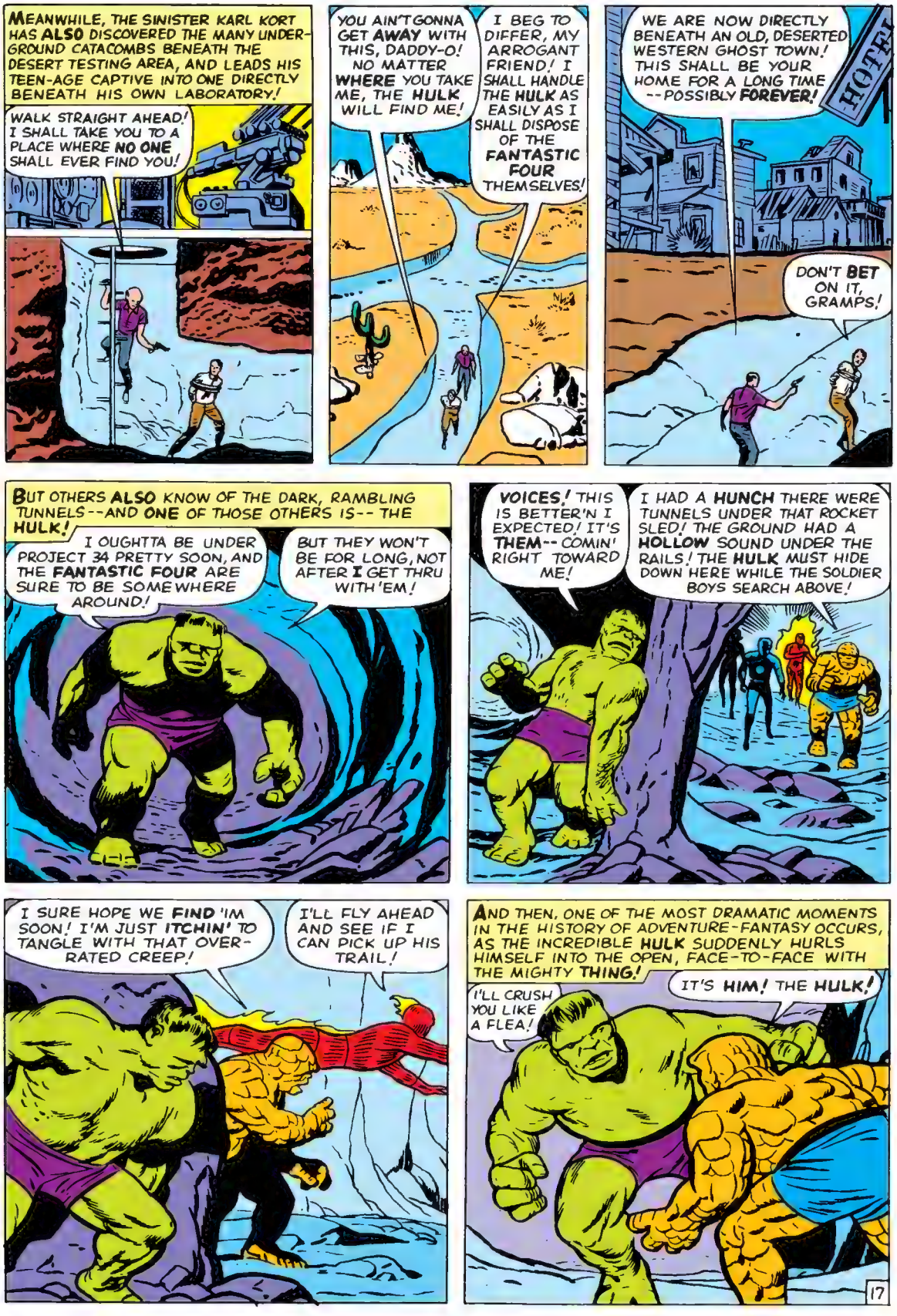

MINUTES LATER, IN HIS HIDDEN UNDERGROUND LAB KNOWN ONLY TO DR. BANNER AND RICK JONES...
THERE'S NO WAY THAT I CAN MAKE THE FANTASTIC FOUR LEAVE THIS AREA!

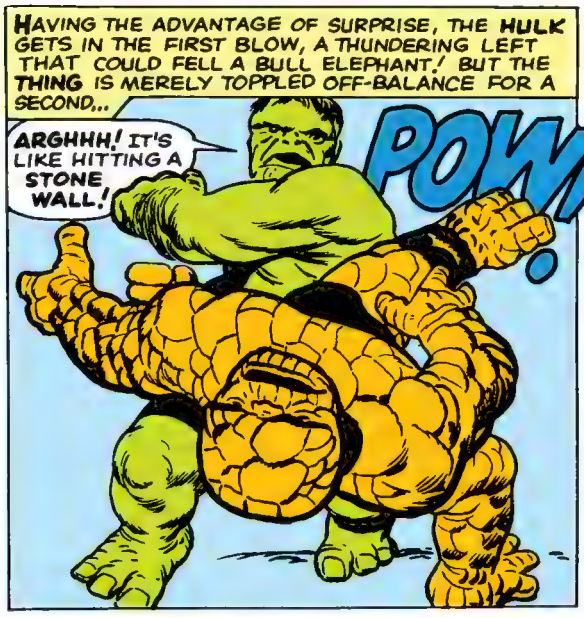
DRAMATICALLY, THE SCIENTIST REMOVES HIS CLOTHES AND STANDS UPON A SENSITIVE, AWESOME DEVICE OF HIS OWN DESIGN...
IT IS TIME FOR ME TO AGAIN ACTIVATE THE ONLY MACHINE ON EARTH THAT CAN DUPLICATE THE INCREDIBLE GAMMA RAYS OF MY GAMMA BOMB!
BZZZT

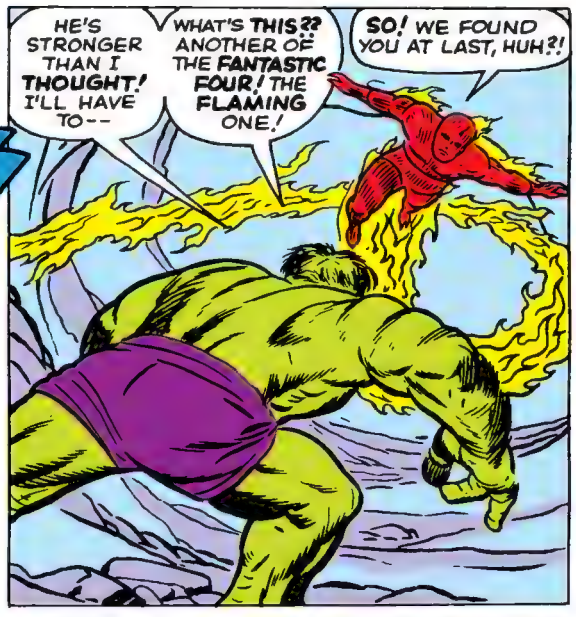
FOR, ALTHOUGH BRUCE BANNER CANNOT COPE WITH THE WRECKER, OR THE FANTASTIC FOUR...

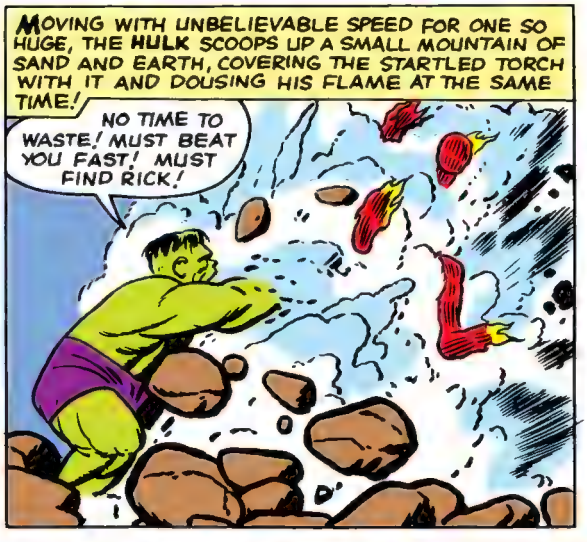
--THERE IS ONE WHO CAN--

--AND IT IS TIME FOR THE HULK TO AGAIN WALK THE EARTH!
16

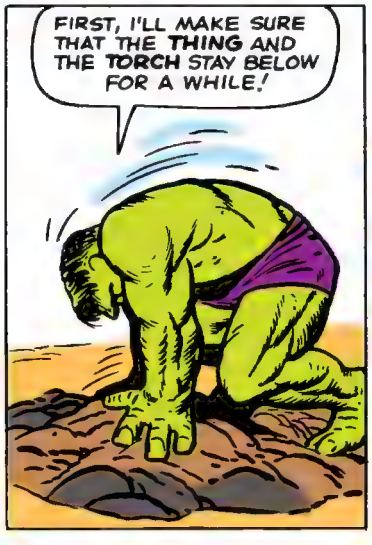

MEANWHILE, THE SINISTER KARL KORT HAS ALSO DISCOVERED THE MANY UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS BENEATH THE DESERT TESTING AREA, AND LEADS HIS TEEN-AGE CAPTIVE INTO ONE DIRECTLY BENEATH HIS OWN LABORATORY!
WALK STRAIGHT AHEAD! I SHALL TAKE YOU TO A PLACE WHERE NO ONE SHALL EVER FIND YOU!
YOU AIN'T GONNA GET AWAY WITH THIS, DADDY-O! NO MATTER WHERE YOU TAKE ME, THE HULK WILL FIND ME!
I BEG TO DIFFER, MY ARROGANT FRIEND! I SHALL HANDLE THE HULK AS EASILY AS I SHALL DISPOSE OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR THEMSELVES!
WE ARE NOW DIRECTLY BENEATH AN OLD, DESERTED WESTERN GHOST TOWN! THIS SHALL BE YOUR HOME FOR A LONG TIME --POSSIBLY FOREVER!
HOTEL
DON'T BET ON IT, GRAMPS!
BUT OTHERS ALSO KNOW OF THE DARK, RAMBLING TUNNELS--AND ONE OF THOSE OTHERS IS-- THE HULK!
I OUGHTTA BE UNDER PROJECT 34 PRETTY SOON, AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE SURE TO BE SOMEWHERE AROUND!
BUT THEY WON'T BE FOR LONG, NOT AFTER I GET THRU WITH 'EM!
VOICES! THIS IS BETTER'N I EXPECTED! IT'S THEM-- COMIN' RIGHT TOWARD ME!
I HAD A HUNCH THERE WERE TUNNELS UNDER THAT ROCKET SLED! THE GROUND HAD A HOLLOW SOUND UNDER THE RAILS! THE HULK MUST HIDE DOWN HERE WHILE THE SOLDIER BOYS SEARCH ABOVE!
I SURE HOPE WE FIND 'IM SOON! I'M JUST ITCHIN' TO TANGLE WITH THAT OVER-RATED CREEP!
I'LL FLY AHEAD AND SEE IF I CAN PICK UP HIS TRAIL!
AND THEN, ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF ADVENTURE-FANTASY OCCURS, AS THE INCREDIBLE HULK SUDDENLY HURLS HIMSELF INTO THE OPEN, FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE MIGHTY THING!
IT'S HIM! THE HULK!
I'LL CRUSH YOU LIKE A FLEA!


HAVING THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE, THE HULK GETS IN THE FIRST BLOW, A THUNDERING LEFT THAT COULD FELL A BULL ELEPHANT! BUT THE THING IS MERELY TOPPLED OFF-BALANCE FOR A SECOND...
ARGHHH! IT'S LIKE HITTING A STONE WALL!
POW!


HE'S STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT! I'LL HAVE TO--
WHAT'S THIS?? ANOTHER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR! THE FLAMING ONE!
SO! WE FOUND YOU AT LAST, HUH?!


MOVING WITH UNBELIEVABLE SPEED FOR ONE SO HUGE, THE HULK SCOOPS UP A SMALL MOUNTAIN OF SAND AND EARTH, COVERING THE STARTLED TORCH WITH IT AND DOUSING HIS FLAME AT THE SAME TIME!
NO TIME TO WASTE! MUST BEAT YOU FAST! MUST FIND RICK!

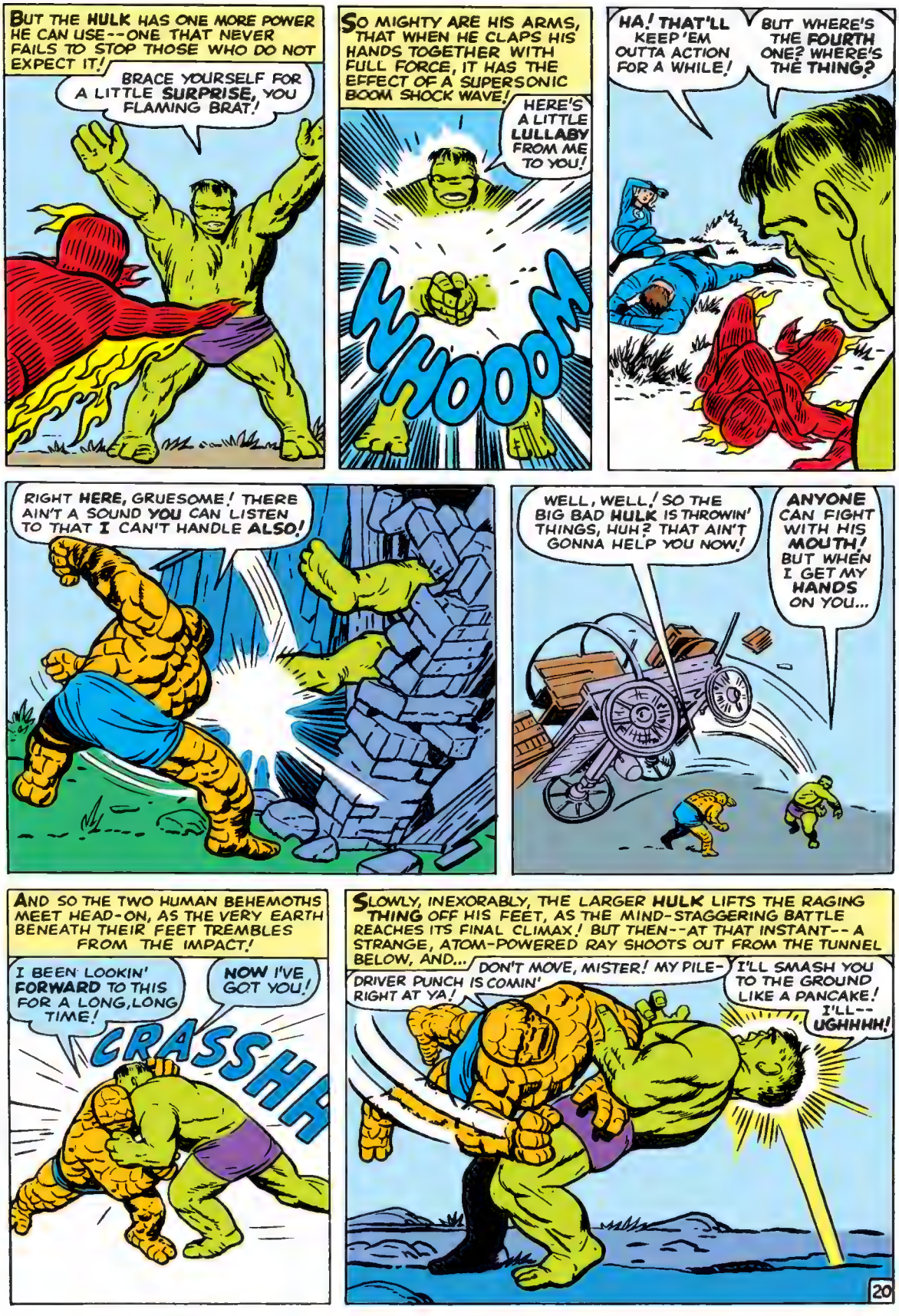
NOW TO FIND THE LAST TWO MEMBERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND FINISH THEM OFF!
MAYBE THEY'VE REACHED THE SURFACE BY NOW!

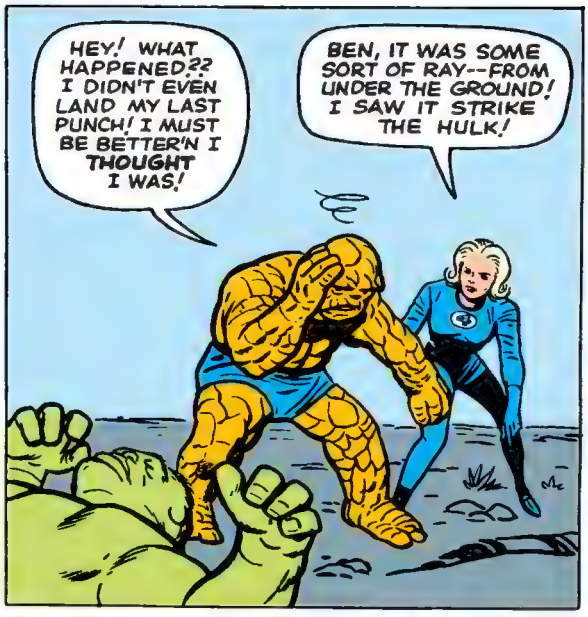

FIRST, I'LL MAKE SURE THAT THE THING AND THE TORCH STAY BELOW FOR A WHILE!

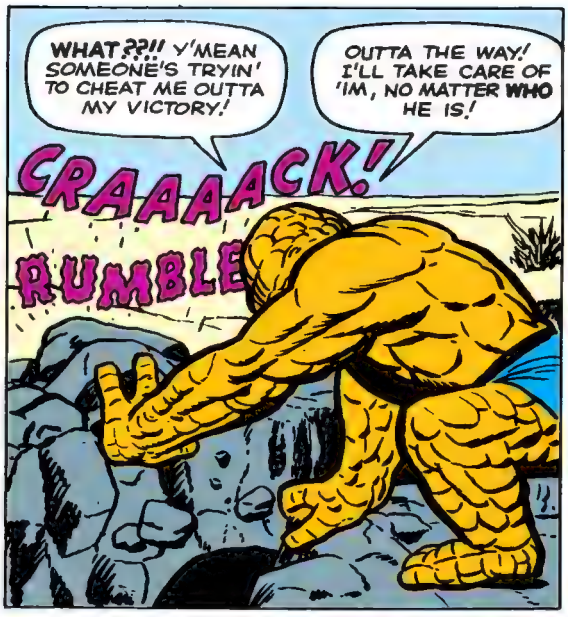
BUT NO MATTER HOW DENSELY PACKED A PORTION OF EARTH MAY BE, IT CAN NEVER STOP THE UNBELIEVABLY PLIABLE LIMBS OF MR. FANTASTIC FROM FINDING THEIR WAY THRU!
THE HULK IS JUST AHEAD OF ME! I CAN HEAR HIS THUNDEROUS STRIDES!

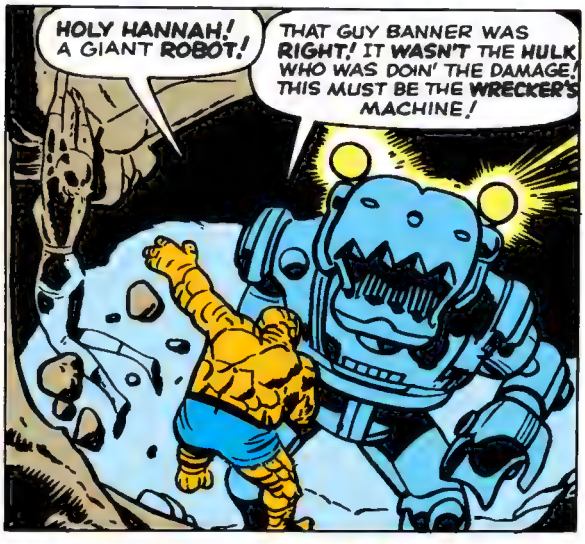
GOT YOU!

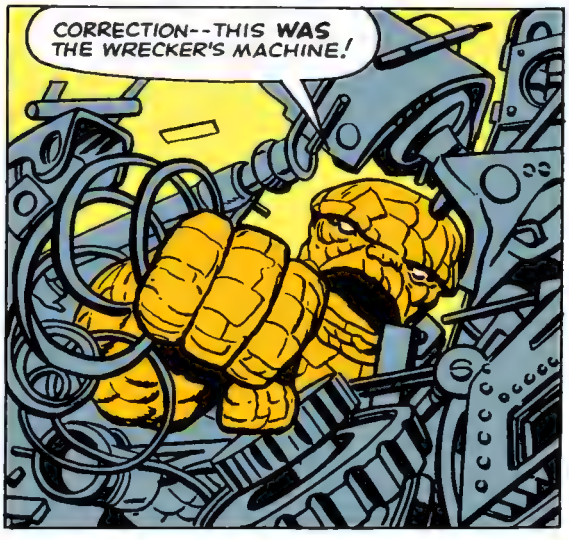
BUT EVEN MR. FANTASTIC IS NO MATCH FOR THE HULK'S PONDEROUS STRENGTH, AS THE ENRAGED CREATURE BREAKS LOOSE OF REED'S TWISTING-VINE GRIP AND GOES ON A SEEMINGLY MAD RAMPAGE!
NICE DIGGIN, THING! I KNEW THE HULK COULDN'T KEEP YOU DOWN FOR LONG!
LOOK OUT! HE'S GOING TO HURL THAT WOODEN FRAME HOUSE AT US!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM, KID! THIS TIME HE AIN'T TAKIN' ME BY SURPRISE!
BARKER HOUSE
THEY'VE ALL GOTTEN FREE! BUT I'LL STOP 'EM WITH THIS!
GUESS AGAIN, BUSTER! THOSE CORNY STUNTS DON'T IMPRESS THE THING!
WHAM!
CAN'T SAVE RICK UNLESS I GET RID OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
BUT THEY'RE TOO POWERFUL TO BEAT ALL AT ONCE! GOT TO SEPARATE 'EM!
I'LL LEAP INTO THE AIR AND FLATTEN THE THING FIRST, IN A POWER DIVE!
NO YOU DON'T, BROTHER! THIS TIME I'VE GOT YOU!
YEAH? WELL, WATCH THIS--
LIKE A LIVING TORNADO, THE HULK SPINS HIMSELF AROUND, CAUSING MR. FANTASTIC TO UNWIND HIS BODY BEFORE THE IRRESISTIBLE POWER OF THE INCREDIBLE CREATURE!
BUT, EVEN AS THEY LAND, A FLAMING, FLASHING, FURIOUS FIGURE HURTLES TOWARDS HIS MIGHTY FOE!
EVEN YOU CAN'T STOP ME NOW, HULK!
19

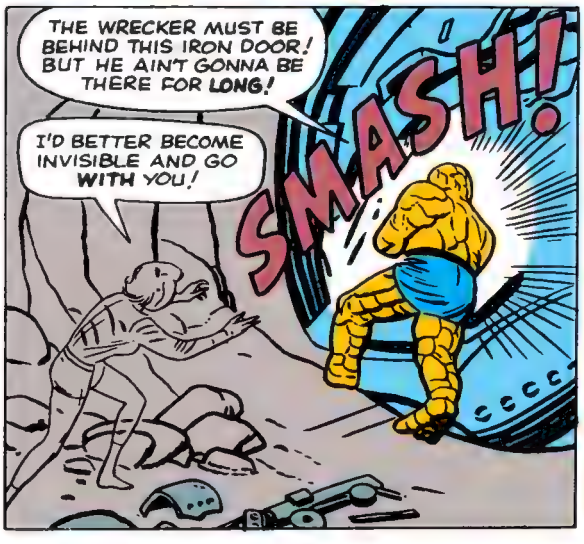

BUT THE HULK HAS ONE MORE POWER HE CAN USE--ONE THAT NEVER FAILS TO STOP THOSE WHO DO NOT EXPECT IT!
BRACE YOURSELF FOR A LITTLE SURPRISE, YOU FLAMING BRAT!
SO MIGHTY ARE HIS ARMS, THAT WHEN HE CLAPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER WITH FULL FORCE, IT HAS THE EFFECT OF A SUPERSONIC BOOM SHOCK WAVE!
HERE'S A LITTLE LULLABY FROM ME TO YOU!
WHOOOM
HA! THAT'LL KEEP 'EM OUTTA ACTION FOR A WHILE!
BUT WHERE'S THE FOURTH ONE? WHERE'S THE THING?
RIGHT HERE, GRUESOME! THERE AIN'T A SOUND YOU CAN LISTEN TO THAT I CAN'T HANDLE ALSO!
WELL, WELL! SO THE BIG BAD HULK IS THROWIN' THINGS, HUH? THAT AIN'T GONNA HELP YOU NOW!
ANYONE CAN FIGHT WITH HIS MOUTH! BUT WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON YOU...
AND SO THE TWO HUMAN BEHEMOTHS MEET HEAD-ON, AS THE VERY EARTH BENEATH THEIR FEET TREMBLES FROM THE IMPACT!
I BEEN LOOKIN' FORWARD TO THIS FOR A LONG, LONG TIME!
NOW I'VE GOT YOU!
CRASSHH
SLOWLY, INEXORABLY, THE LARGER HULK LIFTS THE RAGING THING OFF HIS FEET, AS THE MIND-STAGGERING BATTLE REACHES ITS FINAL CLIMAX! BUT THEN--AT THAT INSTANT--A STRANGE, ATOM-POWERED RAY SHOOTS OUT FROM THE TUNNEL BELOW, AND...
DON'T MOVE, MISTER! MY PILE-DRIVER PUNCH IS COMIN' RIGHT AT YA!
I'LL SMASH YOU TO THE GROUND LIKE A PANCAKE!
I'LL-- UGHHHH!

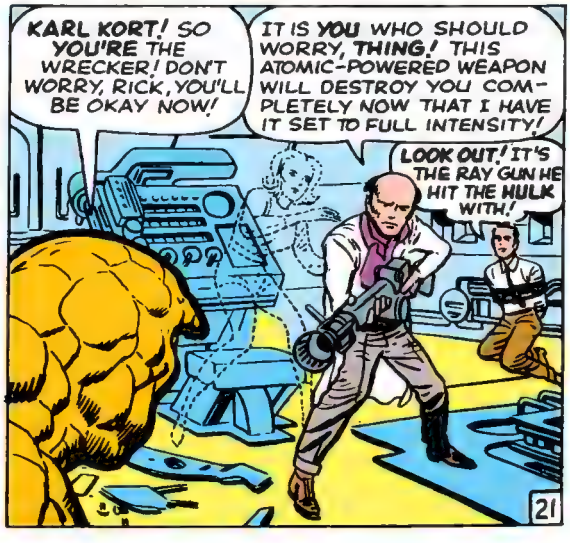

HEY! WHAT HAPPENED?? I DIDN'T EVEN LAND MY LAST PUNCH! I MUST BE BETTER'N I THOUGHT I WAS!
BEN, IT WAS SOME SORT OF RAY--FROM UNDER THE GROUND! I SAW IT STRIKE THE HULK!


WHAT??!! Y'MEAN SOMEONE'S TRYIN' TO CHEAT ME OUTTA MY VICTORY!
OUTTA THE WAY! I'LL TAKE CARE OF 'IM, NO MATTER WHO HE IS!
CRAAAACK!
RUMBLE

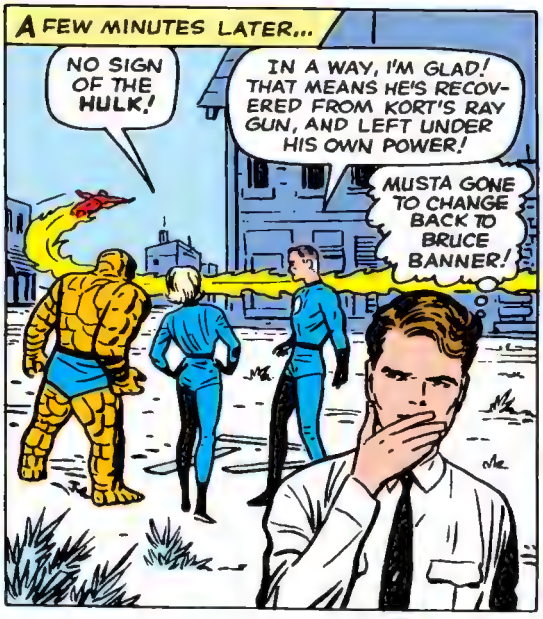

HOLY HANNAH! A GIANT ROBOT!
THAT GUY BANNER WAS RIGHT! IT WASN'T THE HULK WHO WAS DOIN' THE DAMAGE! THIS MUST BE THE WRECKER'S MACHINE!

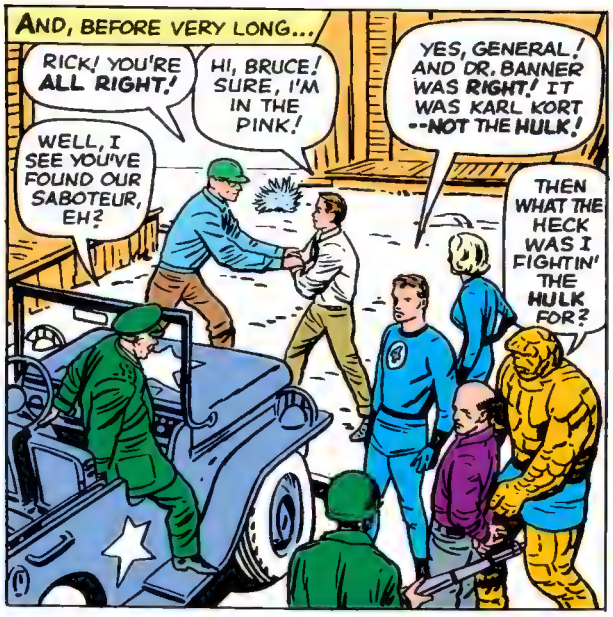

CORRECTION--THIS WAS THE WRECKER'S MACHINE!

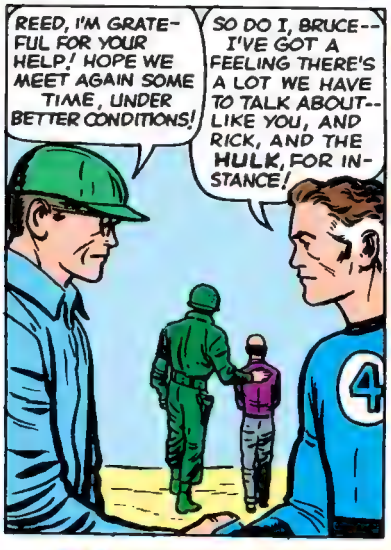

THE WRECKER MUST BE BEHIND THIS IRON DOOR! BUT HE AIN'T GONNA BE THERE FOR LONG!
I'D BETTER BECOME INVISIBLE AND GO WITH YOU!
SMASH!

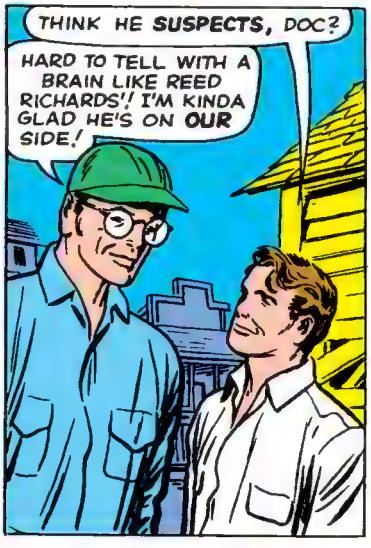

KARL KORT! SO YOU'RE THE WRECKER! DON'T WORRY, RICK, YOU'LL BE OKAY NOW!
IT IS YOU WHO SHOULD WORRY, THING! THIS ATOMIC-POWERED WEAPON WILL DESTROY YOU COMPLETELY NOW THAT I HAVE IT SET TO FULL INTENSITY!
LOOK OUT! IT'S THE RAY GUN HE HIT THE HULK WITH!
21

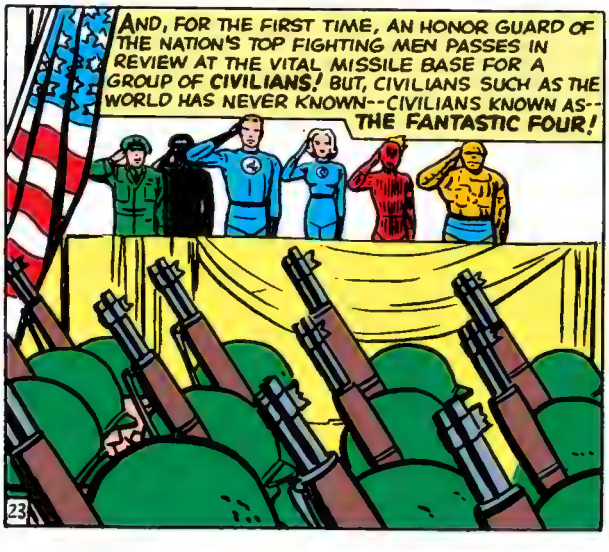
WELL, HE'LL NEVER AIM THAT HORRIBLE DEVICE AT ANOTHER LIVING BEING!
WHA--? WHAT HAPPENED?
BZZZT
BUSTER, WHAT HAPPENED AIN'T NOTHIN' TO WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU!
DON'T HURT HIM, BEN! THE GENERAL WILL WANT HIM FOR QUESTIONING!
ROTTEN, LOW-DOWN SPY! I'D LIKE JUST TWO MINUTES ALONE WITH 'IM!
Y'KNOW SOMETHIN', THING? YOU'RE A PRETTY RIGHT GUY AFTER ALL!
THERE THEY ARE, REED!
WE FOUND THE ROBOT YOU SMASHED, THING! SO WE FIGURED--SAY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH DOCTOR KORT?
DOCTOR, HA! MEET THE WRECKER, KIDDIES!
SO! YOU WERE THE ONE SABOTAGING BRUCE BANNER'S CITY DEFENSE RAY! I SUPPOSE IT WAS EASY FOR YOU TO THROW THE BLAME ON THE HULK, BY USING THAT MONSTROUS ROBOT OF YOURS!
SURE! EVERY-ONE FIGGERED NOBODY BUT THE HULK COULD DO THAT MUCH DAMAGE! 'CEPTIN' ME, OF COURSE!
BUT-- WHERE IS THE HULK?
EVEN AS SUE SPEAKS, THE INCREDIBLE HULK'S MIGHTY BODY RECOVERS FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE SPY'S RAY GUN, AND...
CAN HEAR 'EM TALKING-- UNDER MY FEET! CAUGHT THE WRECKER! RICK IS SAFE!
WITH ONE GIGANTIC LEAP, THE MIGHTIEST LEGS ON EARTH SEND THE HULK SOARING UPWARD...
STILL WEAK FROM RAY-- NO REASON TO HANG AROUND-- GOTTA CHANGE BACK TO BRUCE BANNER--
DON'T WANT THING TO FIND ME TILL I GET MY FULL STRENGTH BACK! WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST 'IM NOW!

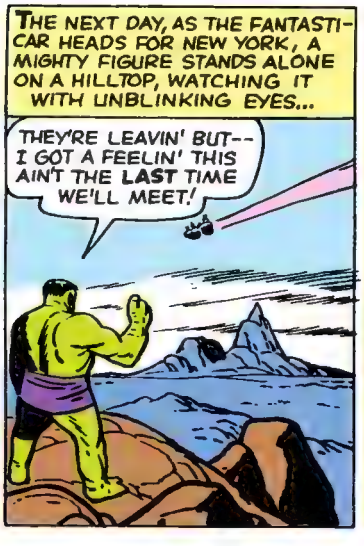

A FEW MINUTES LATER...
NO SIGN OF THE HULK!
IN A WAY, I'M GLAD! THAT MEANS HE'S RECOVERED FROM KORT'S RAY GUN, AND LEFT UNDER HIS OWN POWER!
MUSTA GONE TO CHANGE BACK TO BRUCE BANNER!


AND, BEFORE VERY LONG...
RICK! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
HI, BRUCE! SURE, I'M IN THE PINK!
YES, GENERAL! AND DR. BANNER WAS RIGHT! IT WAS KARL KORT --NOT THE HULK!
WELL, I SEE YOU'VE FOUND OUR SABOTEUR, EH?
THEN WHAT THE HECK WAS I FIGHTIN' THE HULK FOR?


REED, I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP! HOPE WE MEET AGAIN SOME TIME, UNDER BETTER CONDITIONS!
SO DO I, BRUCE-- I'VE GOT A FEELING THERE'S A LOT WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT-- LIKE YOU, AND RICK, AND THE HULK, FOR INSTANCE!




AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME, AN HONOR GUARD OF THE NATION'S TOP FIGHTING MEN PASSES IN REVIEW AT THE VITAL MISSILE BASE FOR A GROUP OF CIVILIANS! BUT, CIVILIANS SUCH AS THE WORLD HAS NEVER KNOWN--CIVILIANS KNOWN AS-- THE FANTASTIC FOUR!


THE NEXT DAY, AS THE FANTASTICAR HEADS FOR NEW YORK, A MIGHTY FIGURE STANDS ALONE ON A HILLTOP, WATCHING IT WITH UNBLINKING EYES...
THEY'RE LEAVIN' BUT-- I GOT A FEELIN' THIS AIN'T THE LAST TIME WE'LL MEET!

WILL THE HULK AGAIN MEET THE FANTASTIC FOUR?? ONLY TIME WILL TELL! BUT-- ONE THING IS CERTAIN-- NEXT ISSUE THE FABULOUS FOURSOME MEET THE RED GHOST, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL SUPER-VILLAINS OF ALL! RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!

THE END

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MYSTERY ON THE MOON!!!
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MORE THAN TWO-HUNDRED THOUSAND MILES FROM EARTH, THE FANTASTIC FOUR FACE THE MENACE OF...
"THE RED GHOST!"
ALSO.....IN THIS SPELLBINDING TALE YOU WILL MEET THE MOST DRAMATIC BEING OF ALL TIME! THE MYSTERIOUS WATCHER!
WHO IS HE? WHAT IS HE?
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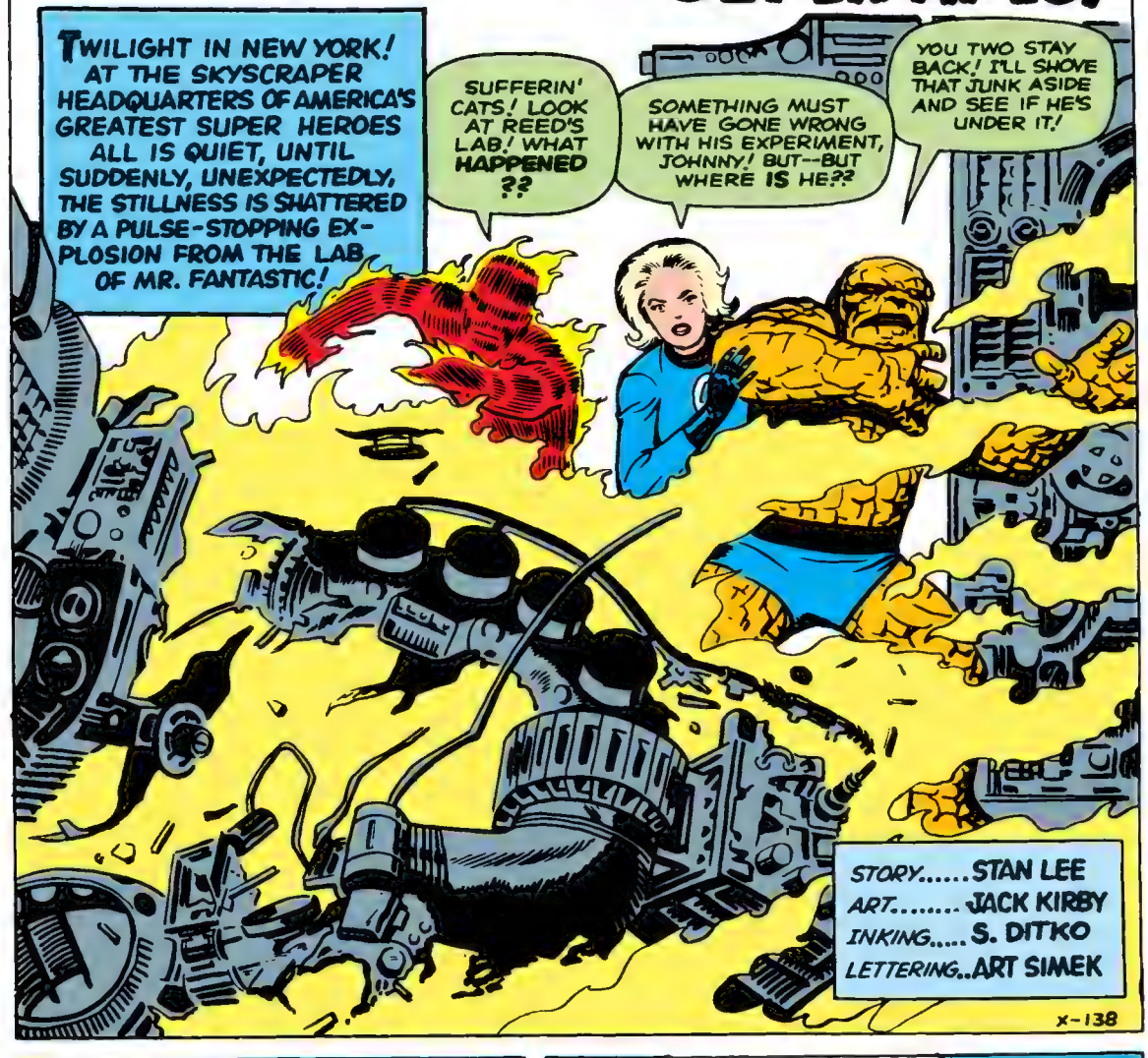
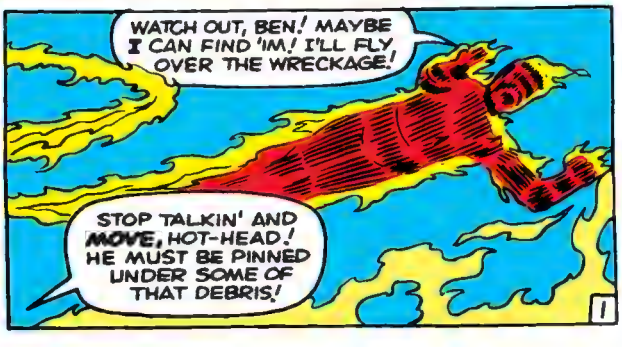
THE FANTASTIC FOUR, versus THE RED GHOST AND HIS INDESCRIBABLE SUPER-APES!


TWILIGHT IN NEW YORK! AT THE SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS OF AMERICA'S GREATEST SUPER HEROES ALL IS QUIET, UNTIL SUDDENLY, UNEXPECTEDLY, THE STILLNESS IS SHATTERED BY A PULSE-STOPPING EXPLOSION FROM THE LAB OF MR. FANTASTIC!
SUFFERIN' CATS! LOOK AT REED'S LAB! WHAT HAPPENED ??
SOMETHING MUST HAVE GONE WRONG WITH HIS EXPERIMENT, JOHNNY! BUT--BUT WHERE IS HE??
YOU TWO STAY BACK! I'LL SHOVE THAT JUNK ASIDE AND SEE IF HE'S UNDER IT!
STORY.....STAN LEE
ART.....JACK KIRBY
INKING.....S. DITKO
LETTERING..ART SIMEK
X-138


WATCH OUT, BEN! MAYBE I CAN FIND 'IM! I'LL FLY OVER THE WRECKAGE!
STOP TALKIN' AND MOVE, HOT-HEAD! HE MUST BE PINNED UNDER SOME OF THAT DEBRIS!
1

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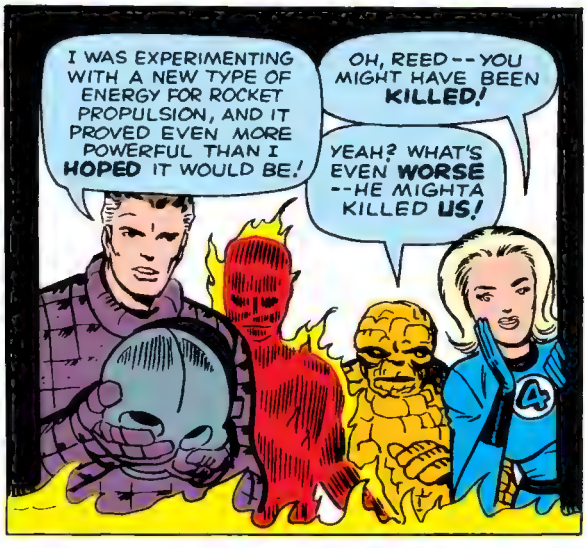
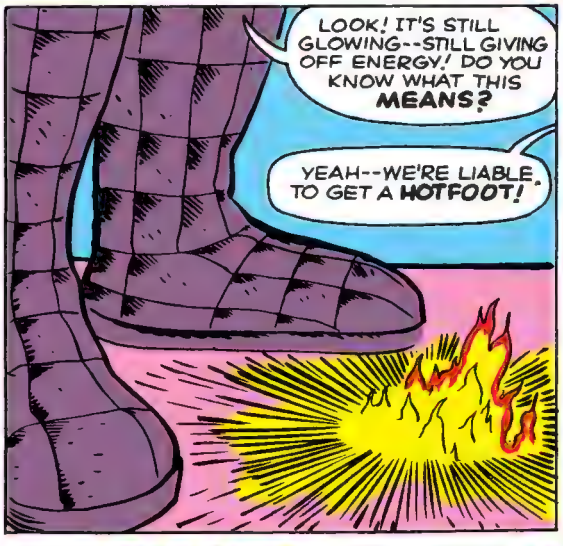
SUDDENLY...
TORCH--COME BACK! I'M OKAY!
GOT TO GET HIM BEFORE THE FUMES OVER-POWER HIM!
THERE HE IS, IN HIS PROTECTIVE STRETCH-SUIT!
THANK HEAVENS --HE'S ALL RIGHT!

GOOD THING THIS SUIT IS ASBESTOS-LINED!
C'MERE, LITTLE PARTNER! THOSE FUMES ARE DANGEROUS!
HUH?

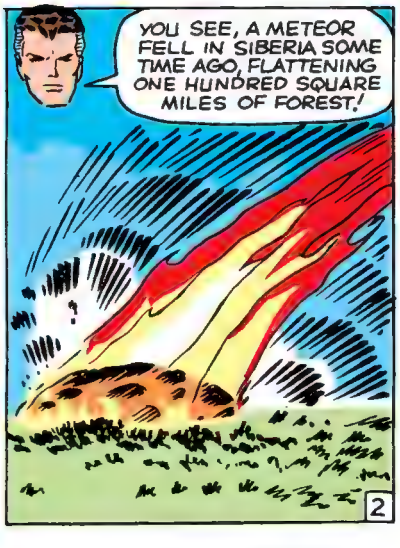
HEY, YOU GOT SOME STRANGE WAY OF THANKIN' A GUY FOR TRYIN' TO HELP!
WHATCHA TRYIN' TO DO? BLOW THE JOINT UP?


I WAS EXPERIMENTING WITH A NEW TYPE OF ENERGY FOR ROCKET PROPULSION, AND IT PROVED EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN I HOPED IT WOULD BE!
OH, REED--YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED!
YEAH? WHAT'S EVEN WORSE --HE MIGHTA KILLED US!


LOOK! IT'S STILL GLOWING--STILL GIVING OFF ENERGY! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?
YEAH--WE'RE LIABLE TO GET A HOTFOOT!

QUIT CLOWNING, BEN! I'VE DISCOVERED A BOOSTER FUEL POWERFUL ENOUGH TO ENABLE US TO CATCH UP WITH THE REDS IN THE RACE TO THE MOON!
YOU MEAN THAT LITTLE THING'LL DO IT?
BUT WHAT IS IT, REED? WHAT'S IT MADE OUT OF?

IT'S COMPOSED OF SUBSTANCES FOUND IN A METEOR CRATER!
I FIRST GOT THE IDEA FOR CREATING IT YEARS AGO--AND I THINK THE REDS THOUGHT OF IT THEN, TOO!


YOU SEE, A METEOR FELL IN SIBERIA SOME TIME AGO, FLATTENING ONE HUNDRED SQUARE MILES OF FOREST!

"I HAVE LONG SUSPECTED THAT THEY DEVELOPED THEIR POWERFUL ROCKET THRUST BY UTILIZING THE ENERGY OF THE BURNED-OUT METEOR! SO, I RECENTLY EXPLORED AN **AMERICAN** METEOR CRATER IN ARIZONA, TO SATISFY MYSELF!"

"I BROUGHT PIECES OF METEORITE BACK TO THE LAB WITH ME, FOR INTENSIVE STUDY! AND THEN I DISCOVERED IT--!"

I WAS **RIGHT!** THERE IS LIMITLESS ENERGY CONTAINED WITHIN THIS FRAGMENT FROM OUTER SPACE!

AND NOW, I'VE FOUND A WAY TO **HARNESS** THAT ENERGY! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS EXPOSE THIS IRON BAR TO THE CORRECT RADIATION...

--AND IT WILL FURNISH THE POWER TO SEND A HUGE ROCKET STRAIGHT TO THE MOON!

THIS MEANS **AMERICA** MAY WIN THE SPACE RACE!

BY NEXT WEEK, AS SOON AS I'VE FINISHED CONVERTING OUR EXPERIMENTAL ROCKET, **THAT'S** WHERE I'LL BE-- IN THE MYSTERIOUS BLUE AREA OF THE MOON!

JUST ONE CHICKEN-SCRATCHIN' MINUTE THERE, PAL! WADDAYA MEAN WHERE **YOU'LL** BE??!

THIS IS THE **FANTASTIC FOUR**, NOT A SOLO ACT! WE'RE GOIN' **WITH** YA!

NO! NO! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS--TOO UNTESTED! I CAN'T ASK YOU TO RISK **YOUR** LIVES WITH ME!

BUT YOU MIGHT **NEED** US, REED!

YOU'RE OUTVOTED, BOSSMAN! YOU'RE **STUCK** WITH US!

TROUBLE WITH **YOU** IS, WE'VE LET YOU BOSS US AROUND SO MUCH...

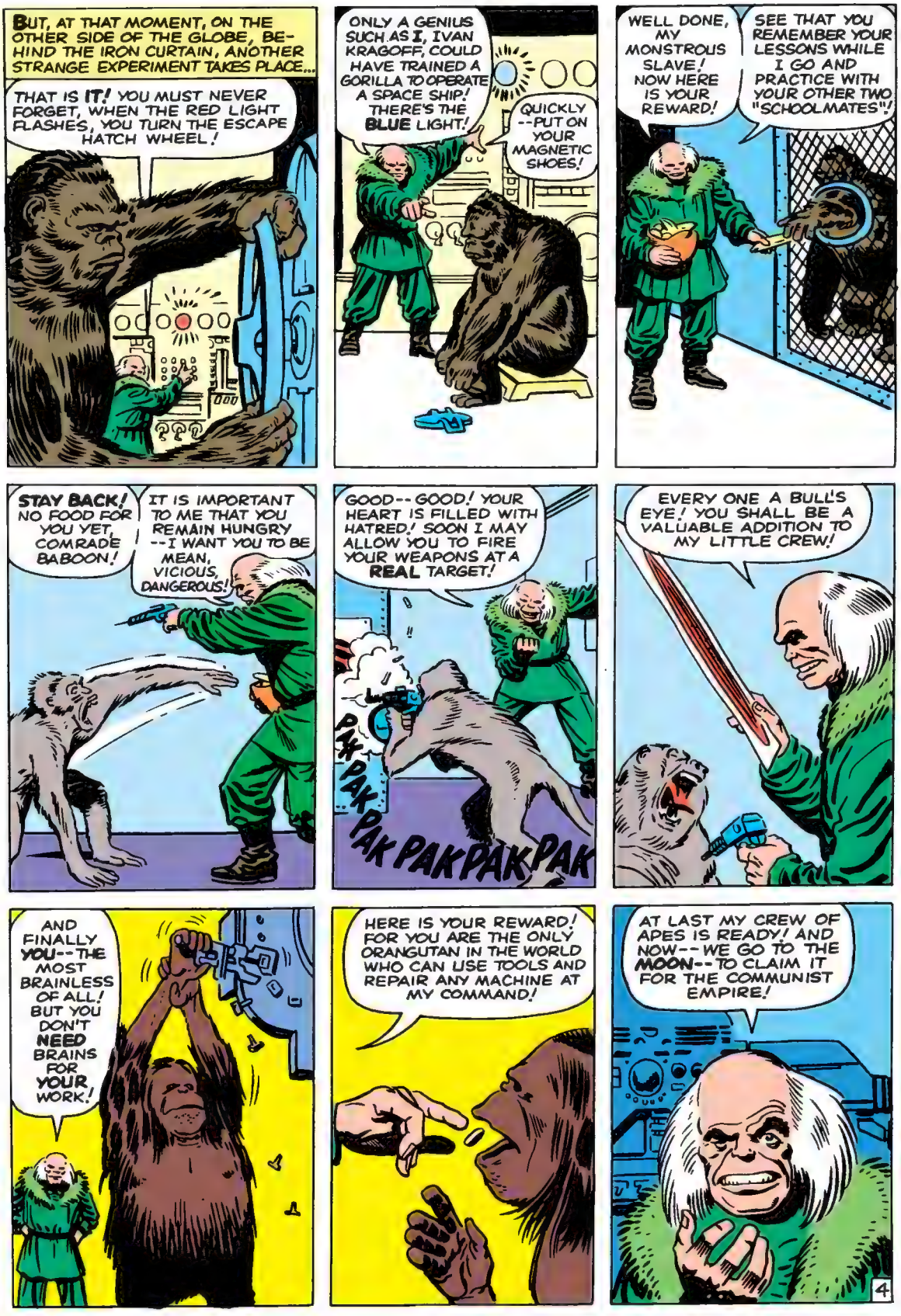
...THAT YOU'RE BEGINNIN' TO THINK YOU CAN GET ALONG **WITHOUT** US!

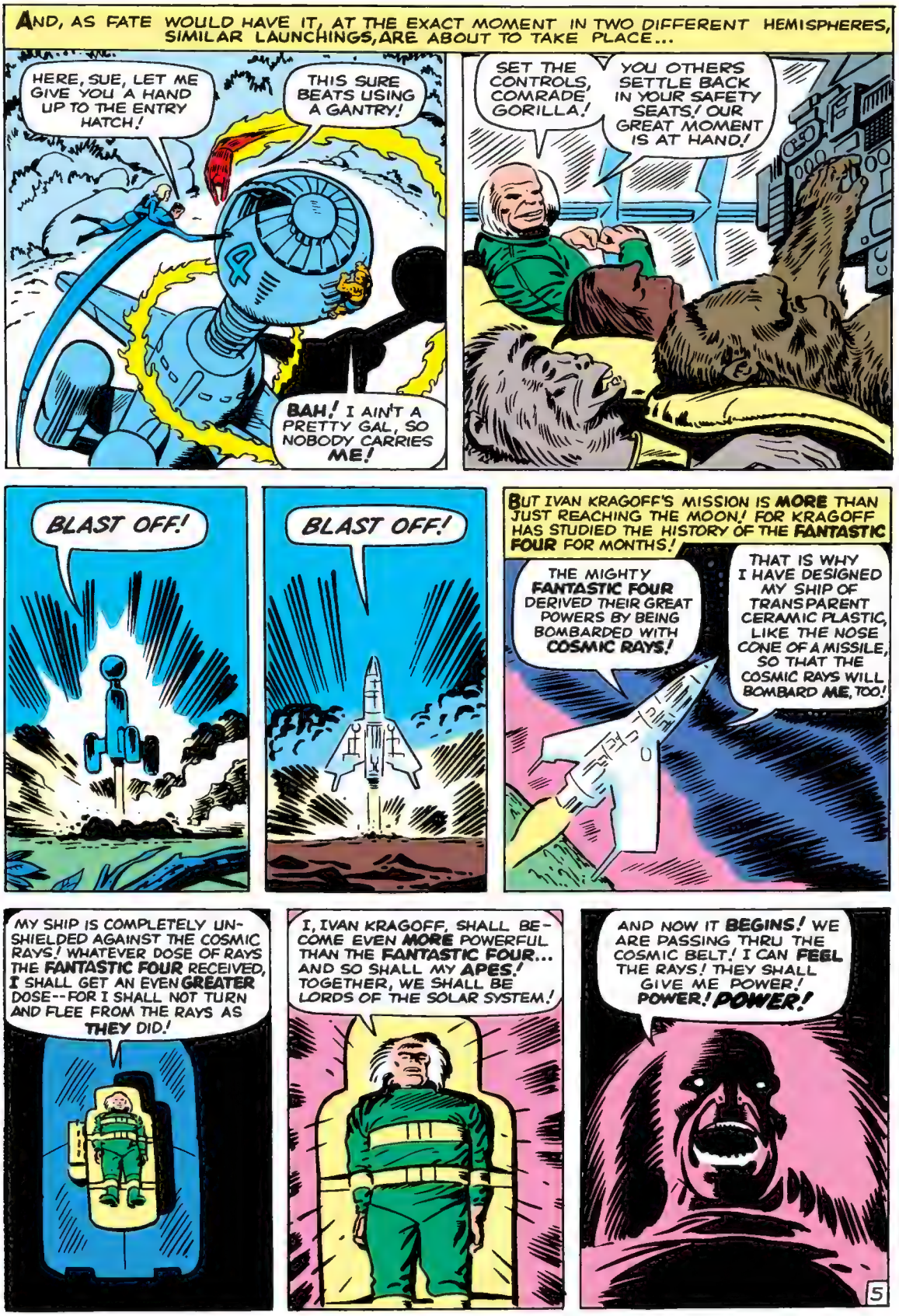
BEN, CUT IT OUT! **DON'T--**

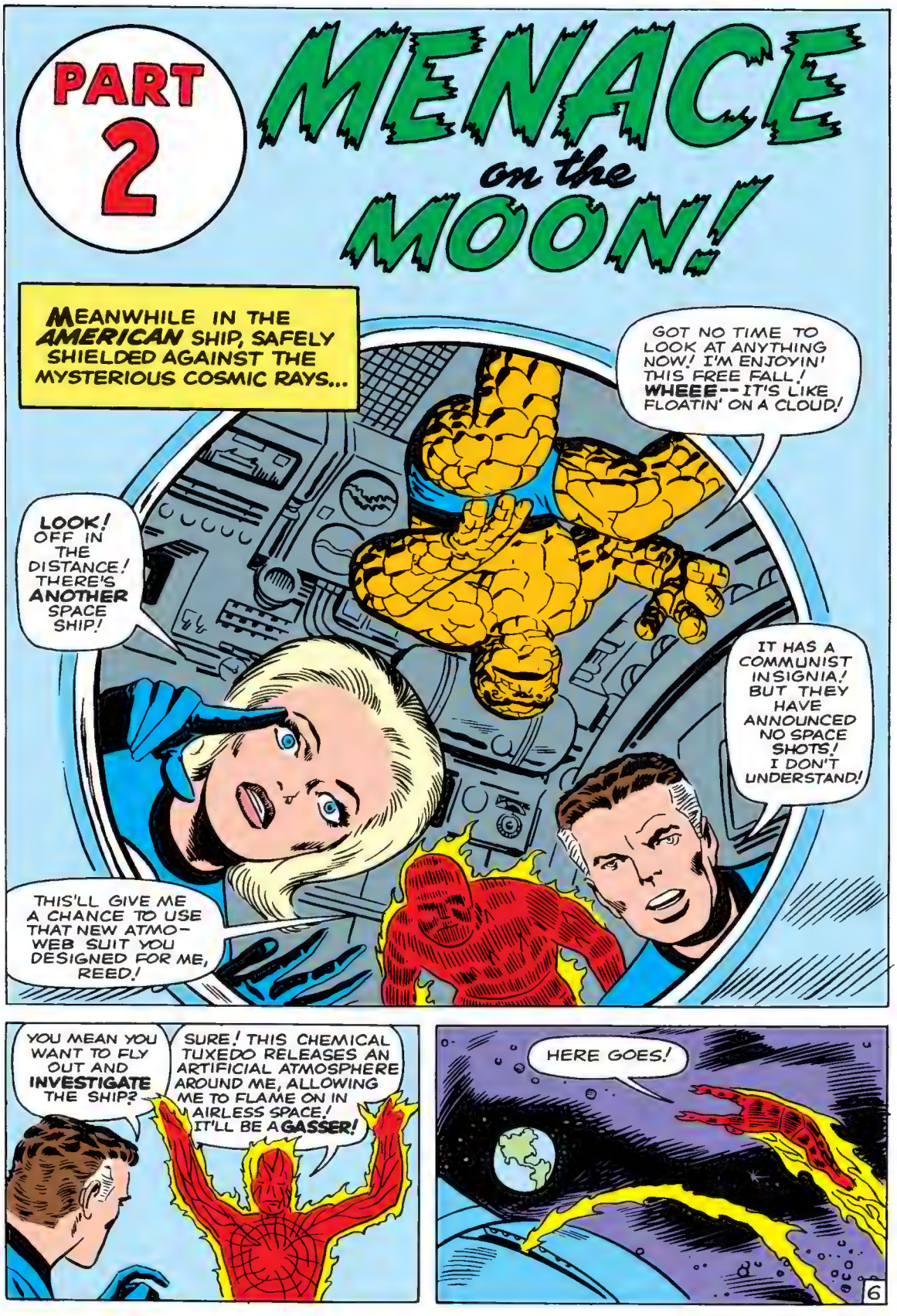
BUT WE GOT A BIG INVESTMENT IN YOU! WE AIN'T GONNA LET YOU GO SOMEWHERE ALONE WHERE YOU MIGHT **HURT** YOUR ADORABLE SELF!

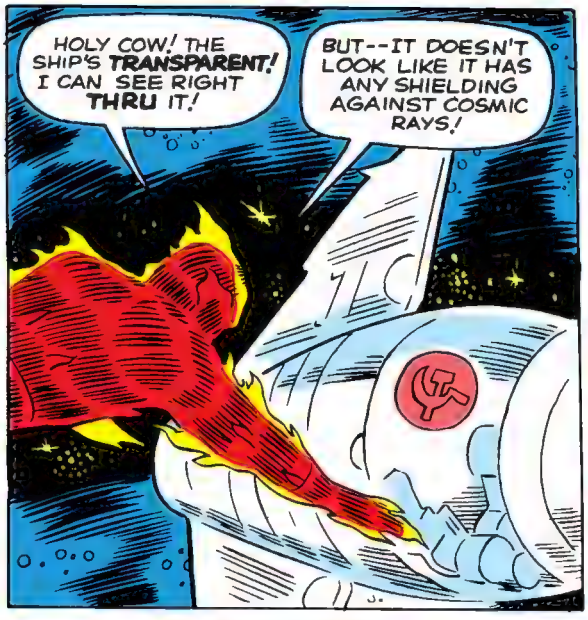
DO YOU GET THE MESSAGE, MISTER?

I READ YOU LOUD AND CLEAR, LITTLE FRIEND! YOU WIN! WE'LL ALL GO TOGETHER!


BUT, AT THAT MOMENT, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLOBE, BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN, ANOTHER STRANGE EXPERIMENT TAKES PLACE...
THAT IS IT! YOU MUST NEVER FORGET, WHEN THE RED LIGHT FLASHES, YOU TURN THE ESCAPE HATCH WHEEL!
ONLY A GENIUS SUCH AS I, IVAN KRAGOFF, COULD HAVE TRAINED A GORILLA TO OPERATE A SPACE SHIP! THERE'S THE BLUE LIGHT!
QUICKLY --PUT ON YOUR MAGNETIC SHOES!
WELL DONE, MY MONSTROUS SLAVE! NOW HERE IS YOUR REWARD!
SEE THAT YOU REMEMBER YOUR LESSONS WHILE I GO AND PRACTICE WITH YOUR OTHER TWO "SCHOOLMATES"!
STAY BACK! NO FOOD FOR YOU YET, COMRADE BABOON!
IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT YOU REMAIN HUNGRY --I WANT YOU TO BE MEAN, VICIOUS, DANGEROUS!
GOOD-- GOOD! YOUR HEART IS FILLED WITH HATRED! SOON I MAY ALLOW YOU TO FIRE YOUR WEAPONS AT A REAL TARGET!
PAK PAK PAK PAK PAK PAK
EVERY ONE A BULL'S EYE! YOU SHALL BE A VALUABLE ADDITION TO MY LITTLE CREW!
AND FINALLY YOU-- THE MOST BRAINLESS OF ALL! BUT YOU DON'T NEED BRAINS FOR YOUR WORK!
HERE IS YOUR REWARD! FOR YOU ARE THE ONLY ORANGUTAN IN THE WORLD WHO CAN USE TOOLS AND REPAIR ANY MACHINE AT MY COMMAND!
AT LAST MY CREW OF APES IS READY! AND NOW-- WE GO TO THE MOON-- TO CLAIM IT FOR THE COMMUNIST EMPIRE!
4


AND, AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, AT THE EXACT MOMENT IN TWO DIFFERENT HEMISPHERES, SIMILAR LAUNCHINGS, ARE ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE...
HERE, SUE, LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND UP TO THE ENTRY HATCH!
THIS SURE BEATS USING A GANTRY!
BAH! I AIN'T A PRETTY GAL, SO NOBODY CARRIES ME!
SET THE CONTROLS, COMRADE GORILLA!
YOU OTHERS SETTLE BACK IN YOUR SAFETY SEATS! OUR GREAT MOMENT IS AT HAND!
BLAST OFF!
BLAST OFF!
BUT IVAN KRAGOFF'S MISSION IS MORE THAN JUST REACHING THE MOON! FOR KRAGOFF HAS STUDIED THE HISTORY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR FOR MONTHS!
THE MIGHTY FANTASTIC FOUR DERIVED THEIR GREAT POWERS BY BEING BOMBARDED WITH COSMIC RAYS!
THAT IS WHY I HAVE DESIGNED MY SHIP OF TRANSPARENT CERAMIC PLASTIC, LIKE THE NOSE CONE OF A MISSILE, SO THAT THE COSMIC RAYS WILL BOMBARD ME, TOO!
MY SHIP IS COMPLETELY UNSHIELDED AGAINST THE COSMIC RAYS! WHATEVER DOSE OF RAYS THE FANTASTIC FOUR RECEIVED, I SHALL GET AN EVEN GREATER DOSE--FOR I SHALL NOT TURN AND FLEE FROM THE RAYS AS THEY DID!
I, IVAN KRAGOFF, SHALL BECOME EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN THE FANTASTIC FOUR... AND SO SHALL MY APES! TOGETHER, WE SHALL BE LORDS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM!
AND NOW IT BEGINS! WE ARE PASSING THRU THE COSMIC BELT! I CAN FEEL THE RAYS! THEY SHALL GIVE ME POWER! POWER! POWER!
5

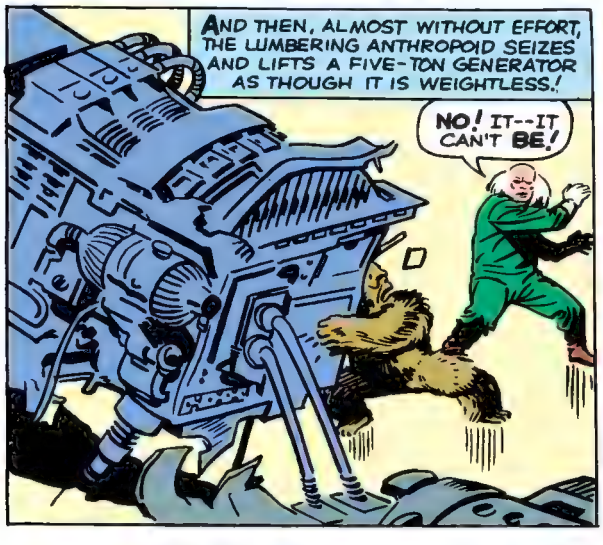

PART 2
MENACE on the MOON!
MEANWHILE IN THE AMERICAN SHIP, SAFELY SHIELDED AGAINST THE MYSTERIOUS COSMIC RAYS...
GOT NO TIME TO LOOK AT ANYTHING NOW! I'M ENJOYIN' THIS FREE FALL! WHEEE-- IT'S LIKE FLOATIN' ON A CLOUD!
LOOK! OFF IN THE DISTANCE! THERE'S ANOTHER SPACE SHIP!
IT HAS A COMMUNIST INSIGNIA! BUT THEY HAVE ANNOUNCED NO SPACE SHOTS! I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
THIS'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO USE THAT NEW ATMO-WEB SUIT YOU DESIGNED FOR ME, REED!
YOU MEAN YOU WANT TO FLY OUT AND INVESTIGATE THE SHIP?
SURE! THIS CHEMICAL TUXEDO RELEASES AN ARTIFICIAL ATMOSPHERE AROUND ME, ALLOWING ME TO FLAME ON IN AIRLESS SPACE! IT'LL BE A GASSER!
HERE GOES!
6


HOLY COW! THE SHIP'S **TRANSPARENT!** I CAN SEE RIGHT **THRU** IT!
BUT--IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT HAS ANY SHIELDING AGAINST COSMIC RAYS!

THIS GETS **KOOKIER** ALL THE TIME! NO ONE'S ABOARD EXCEPT THAT ONE GUY AND A TRIO OF **APES!**
WE HAVE PASSED THRU THE COSMIC BELT! NOW FOR THE GREAT MOMENT! LET US SEE WHAT MIRACULOUS SUPER-POWERS WE HAVE ACQUIRED!

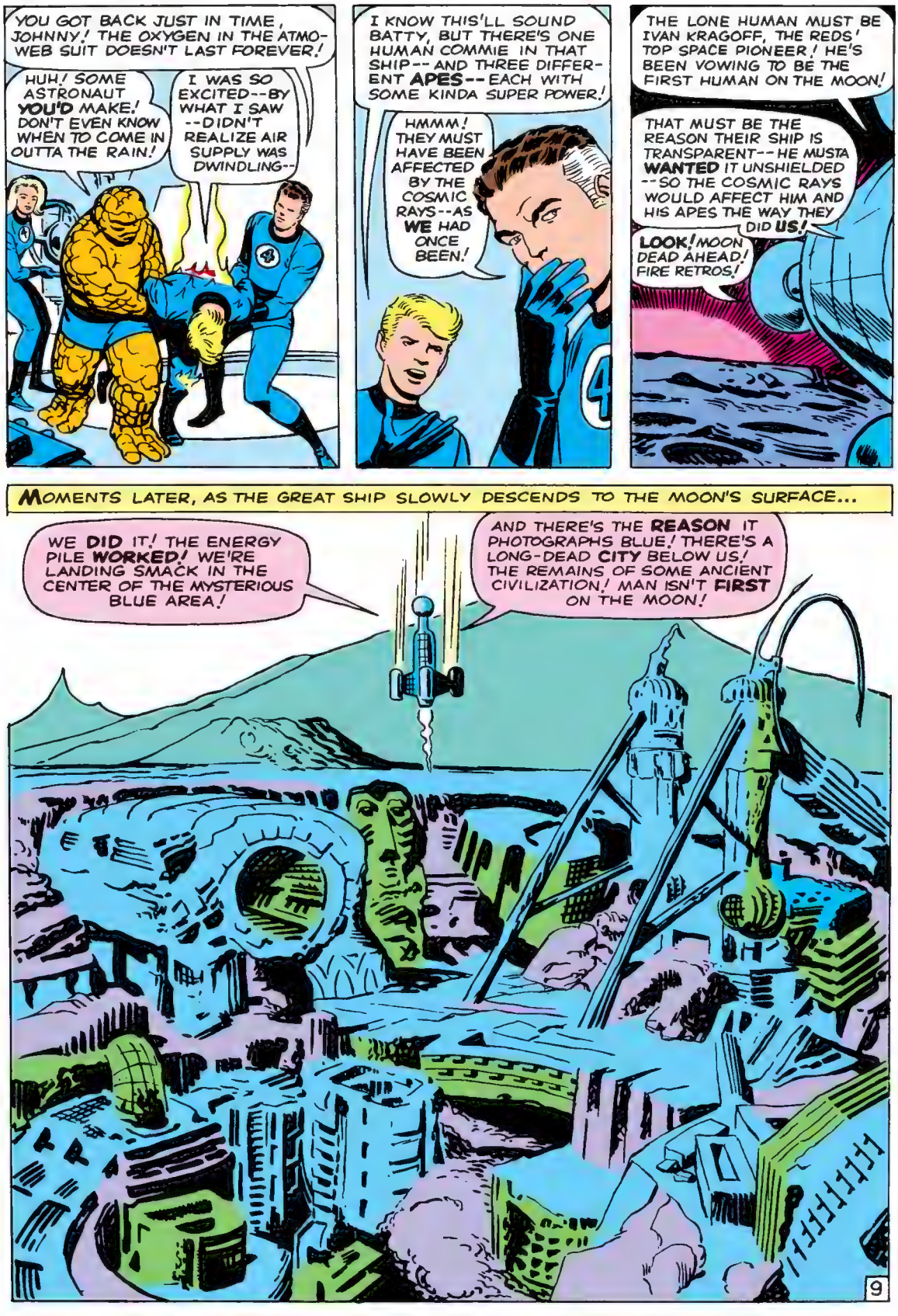
STRANGE--YOU--YOU LOOK EXACTLY THE SAME! NO ONE HAS **CHANGED!**
BUT THAT **CAN'T BE!** THE RAYS **MUST** HAVE AFFECTED US! THEY **MUST HAVE!**

SUDDENLY, THE MASSIVE GORILLA NOTICES THE **HUMAN TORCH'S** FIERY FORM THRU THE TRANSPARENT HULL OF THE SHIP!
WHAT **IS** IT?? WHY ARE YOU GAPING THAT WAY?? WHAT IS WRONG??

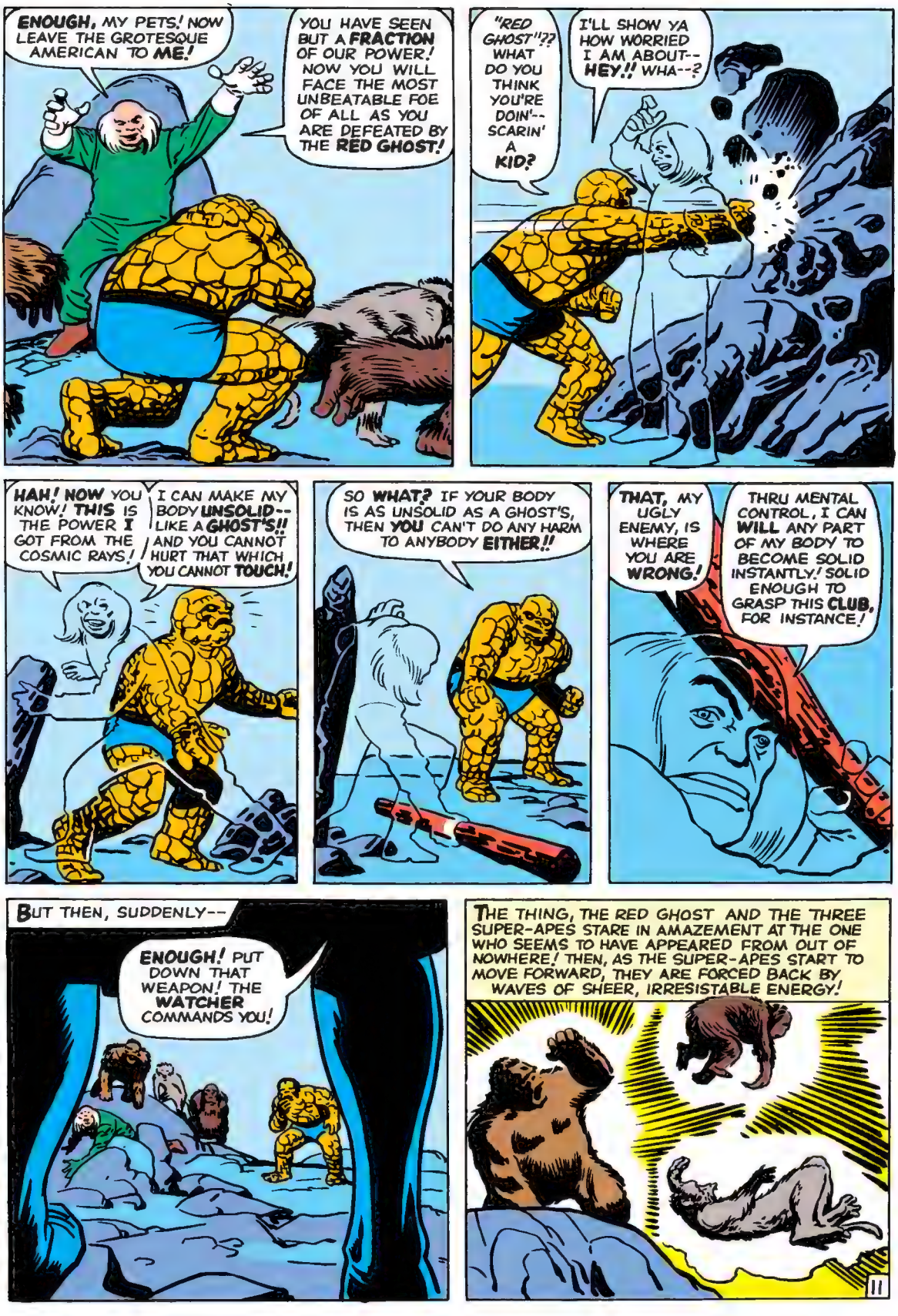

AND THEN, ALMOST WITHOUT EFFORT, THE LUMBERING ANTHROPOID SEIZES AND LIFTS A FIVE-TON GENERATOR AS THOUGH IT IS WEIGHTLESS!
NO! IT--IT CAN'T **BE!**

YOU **HAVE** CHANGED! YOUR STRENGTH HAS INCREASED A **HUNDRED-FOLD!** BUT STAY BACK--**BACK,** TILL I DECIDE WHAT TO **DO** WITH YOU!

THIS GUN WILL KEEP YOU AT BAY TILL--WAIT! THE GUN--WHAT'S HAPPENING TO IT??!
IT'S CHANGING! IT'S ALTERING ITS FORM! IT'S TURNING INTO--
--THE BABOON! HE TOO WAS AFFECTED BY THE COSMIC RAYS! HE NOW HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE HIS SHAPE-- TO TURN INTO A COPY OF ANYTHING!
IT IS MORE THAN I DARED HOPE FOR! BUT WHAT ABOUT THE ORANGUTAN --AND ME??
THEN, AT THAT MOMENT, IVAN KRAGOFF ALSO NOTICES THE HUMAN TORCH...
...AND THE ORANGUTAN SEES THE TORCH, TOO!
THERE IS SOMEONE OUT THERE! THAT IS WHAT EXCITED THE GORILLA BEFORE!
WUUUMMMMMMMM
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOUR ARM--MAGNETIC RAYS ARE COMING FROM IT! YOU--YOU'VE BECOME MAGNETIZED SOMEHOW!
BY POINTING HIS RIGHT ARM AT THE FIGURE OUTSIDE, THE ORANGUTAN REPELLED HIM, JUST AS A DEPOLARIZED MAGNET WOULD REPEL A SHEET OF TIN!
GOT TO MAKE IT BACK TO THE SHIP! GOT TO TELL THE OTHERS!
THEY'VE GOT TO BE WARNED! WE'RE RACING TO THE MOON WITH A COMMUNIST AND THREE SUPER APES--AND THE FOUR OF THEM MAY BE EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN WE ARE!
4
8


YOU GOT BACK JUST IN TIME, JOHNNY! THE OXYGEN IN THE ATMO-WEB SUIT DOESN'T LAST FOREVER!
HUH! SOME ASTRONAUT YOU'D MAKE! DON'T EVEN KNOW WHEN TO COME IN OUTTA THE RAIN!
I WAS SO EXCITED--BY WHAT I SAW --DIDN'T REALIZE AIR SUPPLY WAS DWINDLING--
I KNOW THIS'LL SOUND BATTY, BUT THERE'S ONE HUMAN COMMIE IN THAT SHIP-- AND THREE DIFFER-ENT APES-- EACH WITH SOME KINDA SUPER POWER!
HMMM! THEY MUST HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE COSMIC RAYS--AS WE HAD ONCE BEEN!
THE LONE HUMAN MUST BE IVAN KRAGOFF, THE REDS' TOP SPACE PIONEER! HE'S BEEN VOWING TO BE THE FIRST HUMAN ON THE MOON!
THAT MUST BE THE REASON THEIR SHIP IS TRANSPARENT-- HE MUSTA WANTED IT UNSHIELDED --SO THE COSMIC RAYS WOULD AFFECT HIM AND HIS APES THE WAY THEY DID US!
LOOK! MOON DEAD AHEAD! FIRE RETROS!
MOMENTS LATER, AS THE GREAT SHIP SLOWLY DESCENDS TO THE MOON'S SURFACE...
WE DID IT! THE ENERGY PILE WORKED! WE'RE LANDING SMACK IN THE CENTER OF THE MYSTERIOUS BLUE AREA!
AND THERE'S THE REASON IT PHOTOGRAPHS BLUE! THERE'S A LONG-DEAD CITY BELOW US! THE REMAINS OF SOME ANCIENT CIVILIZATION! MAN ISN'T FIRST ON THE MOON!
9

REED! THERE'S AIR HERE! WE WON'T NEED MASKS!
YIPPEE! I CAN FLAME ON! I CAN FLY!
THE ATMOSPHERE EXTENDS FOR MILES! IT MUST HAVE BEEN CREATED BY THE RACE THAT BUILT THIS CITY!
BUT WE'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE OTHER SHIP! LET ME STRETCH UP AND LOOK AROUND! IT MUST ALSO HAVE LANDED BY NOW!
HEY, LOOK AT THIS! IT'S SOME KIND OF AN ULTRA-MODERN HOUSE!
AND IT LOOKS AS THOUGH SOMEONE'S LIVING IN IT! IT'S NOT IN RUINS LIKE THE REST OF THE PLACE!
WE'D BETTER INVESTIGATE IT! C'MON, SUE, I'LL GIVE YOU A LIFT!
HEY! WAIT FOR ME! HOLD ON!
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! LOOKS LIKE I JUST CAME ALONG FOR THE RIDE!
THE ONLY TIME ANYONE NOTICES ME IS WHEN THEY NEED A HUNK OF MUSCLE TO SAVE THEM!
I MUST BE LOSIN' MY MARBLES! COULDA SWORN I SAW THAT ROCK MOVE! AW, I'LL JUST KICK THE BLAMED THING OUTA MY WAY...
HEY! WHAT THE HECK--!
FOR THE LUVVA PETE! IT TURNED INTO A BABOON!
THERE'S MORE OF 'EM! THEY MUST BE THE THREE APES THE TORCH SAW!
LEGGO, BLAST YA! TAKE YOUR HAIRY PAWS OFF ME BEFORE I SMASH YOUR EMPTY HEADS TOGETHER!


ENOUGH, MY PETS! NOW LEAVE THE GROTESQUE AMERICAN TO ME!
YOU HAVE SEEN BUT A FRACTION OF OUR POWER! NOW YOU WILL FACE THE MOST UNBEATABLE FOE OF ALL AS YOU ARE DEFEATED BY THE RED GHOST!
"RED GHOST"?? WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOIN'-- SCARIN' A KID?
I'LL SHOW YA HOW WORRIED I AM ABOUT-- HEY!! WHA--?
HAH! NOW YOU KNOW! THIS IS THE POWER I GOT FROM THE COSMIC RAYS!
I CAN MAKE MY BODY UNSOLID-- LIKE A GHOST'S!! AND YOU CANNOT HURT THAT WHICH YOU CANNOT TOUCH!
SO WHAT? IF YOUR BODY IS AS UNSOLID AS A GHOST'S, THEN YOU CAN'T DO ANY HARM TO ANYBODY EITHER!!
THAT, MY UGLY ENEMY, IS WHERE YOU ARE WRONG!
THRU MENTAL CONTROL, I CAN WILL ANY PART OF MY BODY TO BECOME SOLID INSTANTLY! SOLID ENOUGH TO GRASP THIS CLUB, FOR INSTANCE!
BUT THEN, SUDDENLY--
ENOUGH! PUT DOWN THAT WEAPON! THE WATCHER COMMANDS YOU!
THE THING, THE RED GHOST AND THE THREE SUPER-APES STARE IN AMAZEMENT AT THE ONE WHO SEEMS TO HAVE APPEARED FROM OUT OF NOWHERE! THEN, AS THE SUPER-APES START TO MOVE FORWARD, THEY ARE FORCED BACK BY WAVES OF SHEER, IRRESISTABLE ENERGY!
11

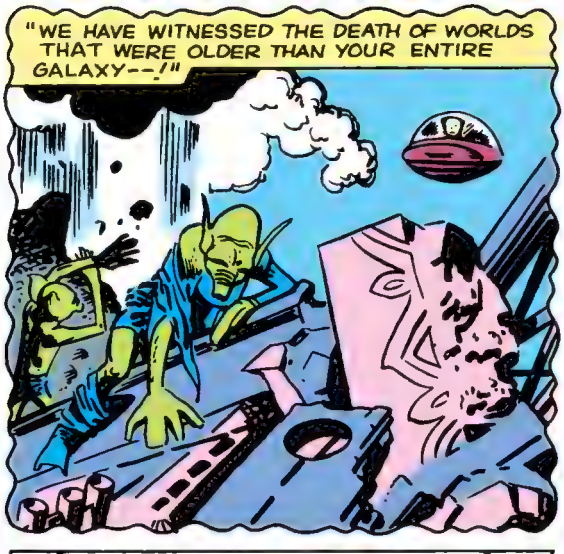
PART 3
"THE WATCHER APPEARS!"
SUDDENLY, BEFORE THE THING CAN MAKE ANOTHER MOVE, THE THREE APES ARE WHISKED AWAY FROM HIM BY AN INVISIBLE FORCE AND PLACED INTO UNBREAKABLE GLOBULES OF SHIMMERING SYNTHO-MATTER! AND THEN, A STRANGE, RICH VOICE RINGS OUT...
CEASE THIS USELESS CONFLICT! THE WATCHER COMMANDS YOU!
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE??! HOW'D THE APES GET INTO THOSE FLOATING GLOBES?? AND WHO--WHO IS THAT??
X-138

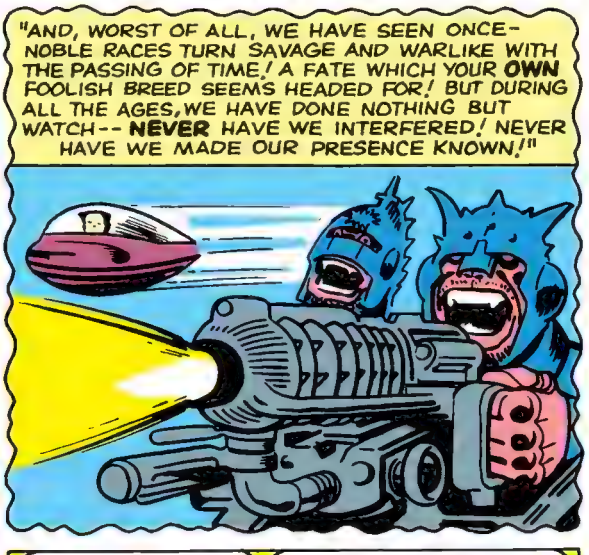
IT SHALL ALL BE EXPLAINED, IN DUE TIME! BUT FIRST...

...I MUST BRING BOTH OPPOSING FORCES TOGETHER! COME FROM YOUR PLACE OF CONCEALMENT, IVAN KRAGOFF!
12

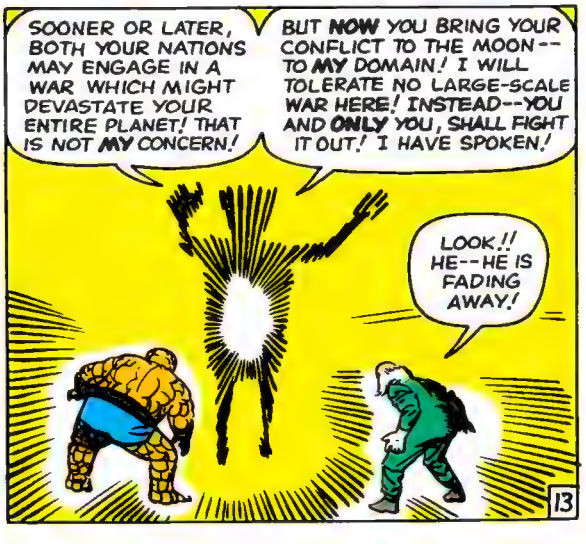
AND THEN, SLOWLY, QUIETLY, THE WATCHER SPEAKS...
HEAR MY WORDS, YOU OF EARTH! I COME FROM A WORLD SO FAR FROM HERE THAT YOU DO NOT EVEN SUSPECT ITS EXISTENCE! OUR ENTIRE HOME PLANET IS ONE VAST, GIGANTIC COMPUTER!

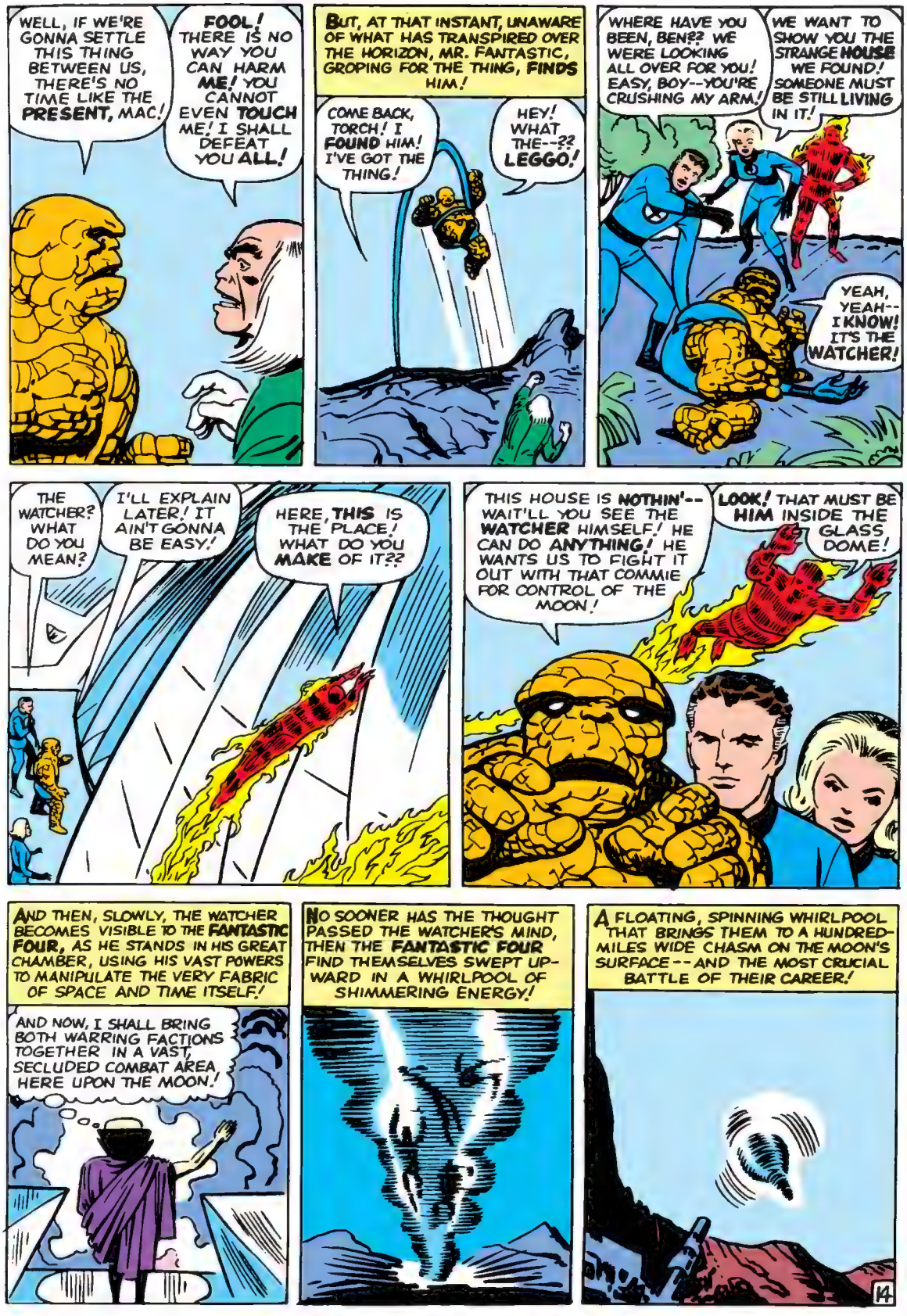
"MY PEOPLE ROAM THE ENTIRE KNOWN UNIVERSE, WATCHING, OBSERVING OTHER WORLDS! WE HAVE SEEN PLANETS WHERE LIFE EVOLVED FROM SEAS OF MOLTEN METAL...!"

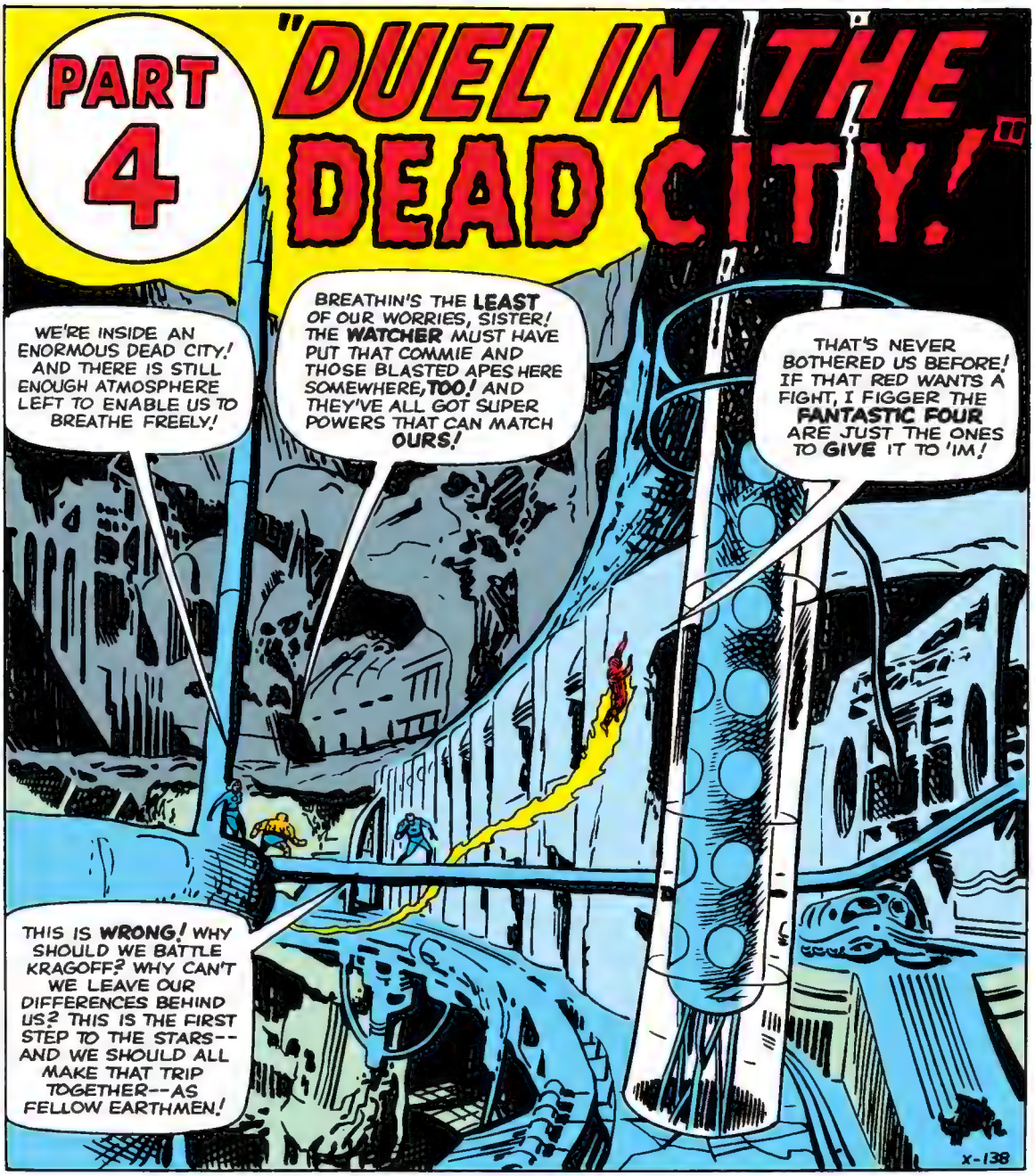

"WE HAVE WITNESSED THE DEATH OF WORLDS THAT WERE OLDER THAN YOUR ENTIRE GALAXY--!"

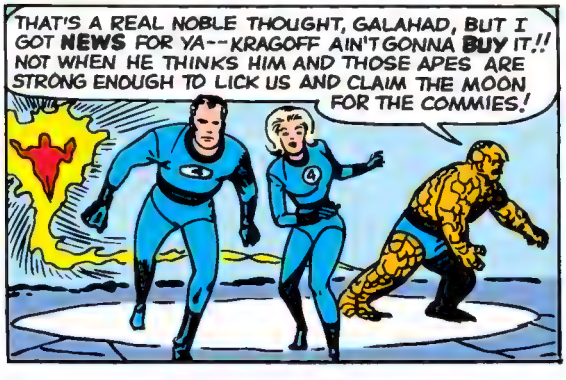

"AND, WORST OF ALL, WE HAVE SEEN ONCE-NOBLE RACES TURN SAVAGE AND WARLIKE WITH THE PASSING OF TIME! A FATE WHICH YOUR OWN FOOLISH BREED SEEMS HEADED FOR! BUT DURING ALL THE AGES, WE HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT WATCH-- NEVER HAVE WE INTERFERED! NEVER HAVE WE MADE OUR PRESENCE KNOWN!"

BUT NOW, I HAVE BROKEN THE SILENCE OF CENTURIES, IN ORDER TO SAVE YOUR PEOPLE FROM SAVAGERY!
YOU DARE THINK YOU CAN STOP THE COMMUNIST MARCH OF CONQUEST!?!?!
SHUDDUP! LET 'IM FINISH!

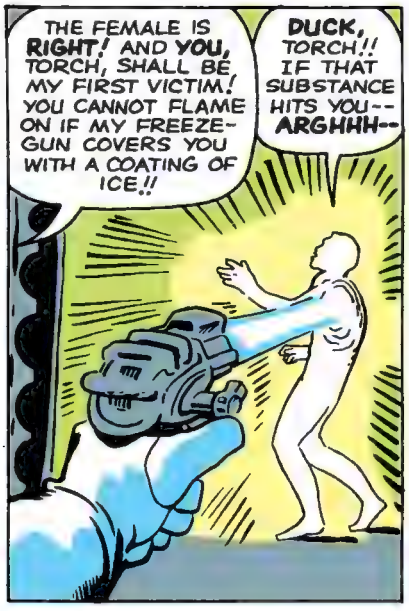

SOONER OR LATER, BOTH YOUR NATIONS MAY ENGAGE IN A WAR WHICH MIGHT DEVASTATE YOUR ENTIRE PLANET! THAT IS NOT MY CONCERN!
BUT NOW YOU BRING YOUR CONFLICT TO THE MOON-- TO MY DOMAIN! I WILL TOLERATE NO LARGE-SCALE WAR HERE! INSTEAD--YOU AND ONLY YOU, SHALL FIGHT IT OUT! I HAVE SPOKEN!
LOOK!! HE--HE IS FADING AWAY!


WELL, IF WE'RE GONNA SETTLE THIS THING BETWEEN US, THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT, MAC!
FOOL! THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN HARM ME! YOU CANNOT EVEN TOUCH ME! I SHALL DEFEAT YOU ALL!
BUT, AT THAT INSTANT, UNAWARE OF WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED OVER THE HORIZON, MR. FANTASTIC, GROPING FOR THE THING, FINDS HIM!
COME BACK, TORCH! I FOUND HIM! I'VE GOT THE THING!
HEY! WHAT THE--?? LEGGO!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, BEN?? WE WERE LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU! EASY, BOY--YOU'RE CRUSHING MY ARM!
WE WANT TO SHOW YOU THE STRANGE HOUSE WE FOUND! SOMEONE MUST BE STILL LIVING IN IT!
YEAH, YEAH-- I KNOW! IT'S THE WATCHER!
THE WATCHER? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER! IT AIN'T GONNA BE EASY!
HERE, THIS IS THE PLACE! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT??
THIS HOUSE IS NOTHIN'-- WAIT'LL YOU SEE THE WATCHER HIMSELF! HE CAN DO ANYTHING! HE WANTS US TO FIGHT IT OUT WITH THAT COMMIE FOR CONTROL OF THE MOON!
LOOK! THAT MUST BE HIM INSIDE THE GLASS DOME!
AND THEN, SLOWLY, THE WATCHER BECOMES VISIBLE TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR, AS HE STANDS IN HIS GREAT CHAMBER, USING HIS VAST POWERS TO MANIPULATE THE VERY FABRIC OF SPACE AND TIME ITSELF!
AND NOW, I SHALL BRING BOTH WARRING FACTIONS TOGETHER IN A VAST, SECLUDED COMBAT AREA HERE UPON THE MOON!
NO SOONER HAS THE THOUGHT PASSED THE WATCHER'S MIND, THEN THE FANTASTIC FOUR FIND THEMSELVES SWEPT UPWARD IN A WHIRLPOOL OF SHIMMERING ENERGY!
A FLOATING, SPINNING WHIRLPOOL THAT BRINGS THEM TO A HUNDRED-MILES WIDE CHASM ON THE MOON'S SURFACE -- AND THE MOST CRUCIAL BATTLE OF THEIR CAREER!
14


PART 4
"DUEL IN THE DEAD CITY!"
WE'RE INSIDE AN ENORMOUS DEAD CITY! AND THERE IS STILL ENOUGH ATMOSPHERE LEFT TO ENABLE US TO BREATHE FREELY!
BREATHIN'S THE LEAST OF OUR WORRIES, SISTER! THE WATCHER MUST HAVE PUT THAT COMMIE AND THOSE BLASTED APES HERE SOMEWHERE, TOO! AND THEY'VE ALL GOT SUPER POWERS THAT CAN MATCH OURS!
THAT'S NEVER BOTHERED US BEFORE! IF THAT RED WANTS A FIGHT, I FIGGER THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE JUST THE ONES TO GIVE IT TO 'IM!
THIS IS WRONG! WHY SHOULD WE BATTLE KRAGOFF? WHY CAN'T WE LEAVE OUR DIFFERENCES BEHIND US? THIS IS THE FIRST STEP TO THE STARS--AND WE SHOULD ALL MAKE THAT TRIP TOGETHER--AS FELLOW EARTHMEN!
X-138

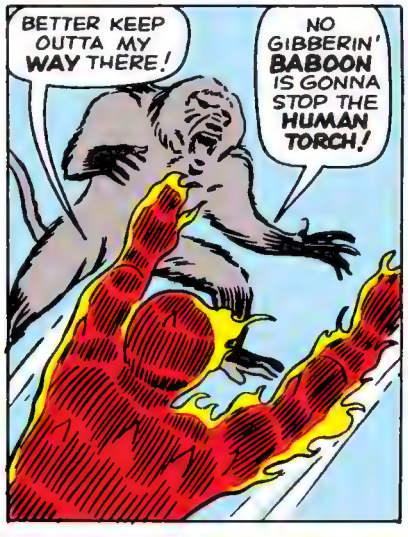

THAT'S A REAL NOBLE THOUGHT, GALAHAD, BUT I GOT NEWS FOR YA--KRAGOFF AIN'T GONNA BUY IT!! NOT WHEN HE THINKS HIM AND THOSE APES ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO LICK US AND CLAIM THE MOON, FOR THE COMMIES!

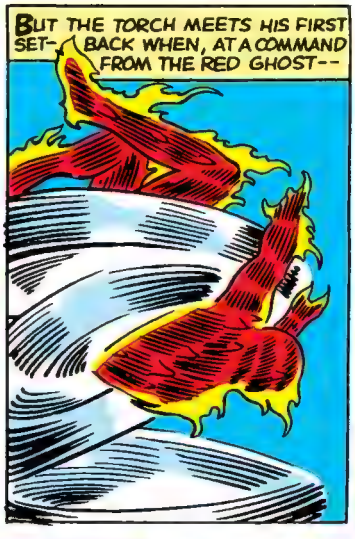
BEN, NOBODY IS STRONG ENOUGH TO DEFEAT A FREE PEOPLE! DON'T EVER FORGET THAT!
THAT HORRIBLE MAN --AND THOSE DEADLY BEASTS--THEY MIGHT BE WATCHING US AT THIS VERY MOMENT--WAITING TO STRIKE!


THE FEMALE IS RIGHT! AND YOU, TORCH, SHALL BE MY FIRST VICTIM! YOU CANNOT FLAME ON IF MY FREEZE-GUN COVERS YOU WITH A COATING OF ICE!!
DUCK, TORCH!! IF THAT SUBSTANCE HITS YOU-- ARGHHH--

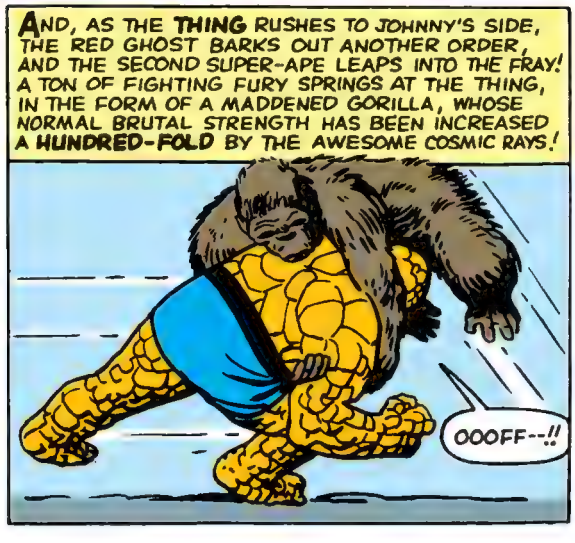
A TRULY NOBLE GESTURE! YOU HAVE SACRIFICED YOURSELF FOR THE FLAMING ONE! BUT NOW I CAN SEIZE THE HELPLESS FEMALE AND HOLD HER HOSTAGE!

HE'S GOT SUE! BUT NOT FOR LONG!
YOU'N ME ARE ALWAYS CLAMORIN' FOR ACTION, HOTHEAD! WELL, HERE'S OUR CHANCE! LET'S GO!


BETTER KEEP OUTTA MY WAY THERE!
NO GIBBERIN' BABOON IS GONNA STOP THE HUMAN TORCH!

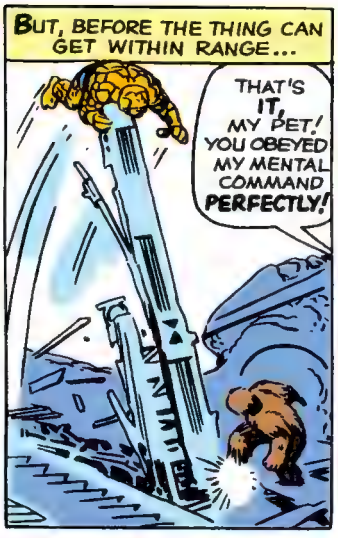

BUT THE TORCH MEETS HIS FIRST SET-BACK WHEN, AT A COMMAND FROM THE RED GHOST--

--THE FAST-MOVING SUPER-APE TURNS HIMSELF INTO--A MASS OF THICK ASBESTOS, SMOTHERING THE TORCH'S FLAME WITHIN HIS DEADLY EMBRACE!

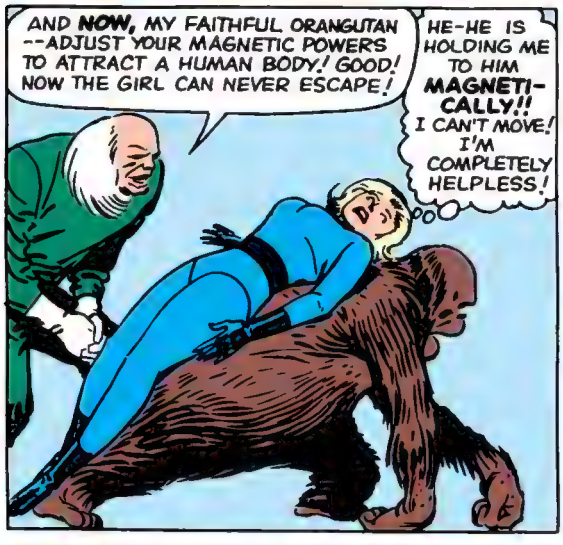

AND, AS THE THING RUSHES TO JOHNNY'S SIDE, THE RED GHOST BARKS OUT ANOTHER ORDER, AND THE SECOND SUPER-APE LEAPS INTO THE FRAY! A TON OF FIGHTING FURY SPRINGS AT THE THING, IN THE FORM OF A MADDENED GORILLA, WHOSE NORMAL BRUTAL STRENGTH HAS BEEN INCREASED A HUNDRED-FOLD BY THE AWESOME COSMIC RAYS!
OOOFF--!!

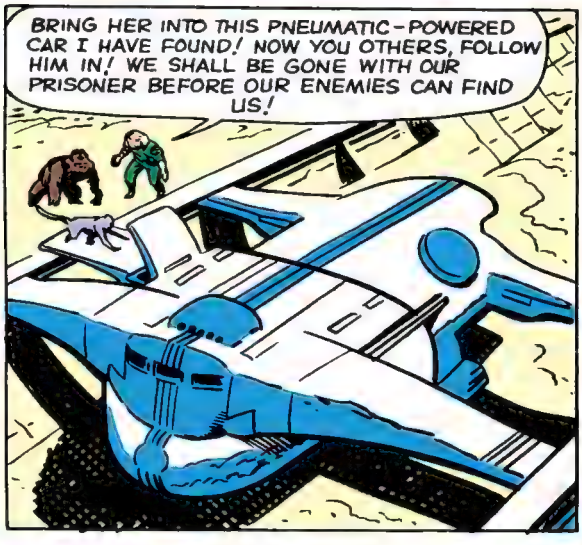
THOSE BLASTED RAYS MADE HIM STRONGER THAN ME! HE TOSSED ME LIKE I WAS NOTHIN'!! WE REALLY GOT A FIGHT ON OUR HANDS!

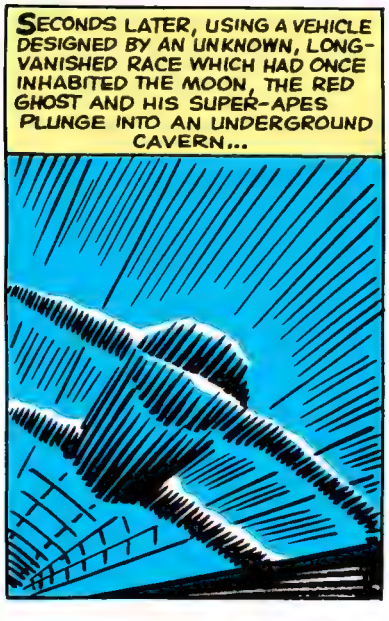
THE MEASURE OF A MAN IS NOT HOW WELL HE FIGHTS A WINNING FIGHT, BUT HOW BRAVELY HE FACES HOPELESS ODDS!! AND BENEATH HIS GROTESQUE EXTERIOR, BEN GRIMM IS INDEED--A MAN!
NO MATTER HOW STRONG YA ARE--JUST LET ME LAND ONE HAYMAKER ON YA--JUST ONE!!

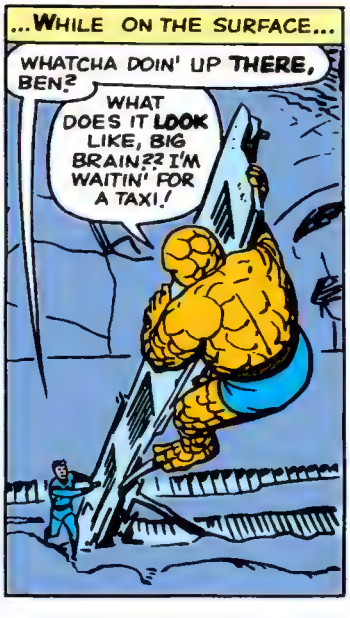

BUT, BEFORE THE THING CAN GET WITHIN RANGE...
THAT'S IT, MY PET! YOU OBEYED MY MENTAL COMMAND PERFECTLY!

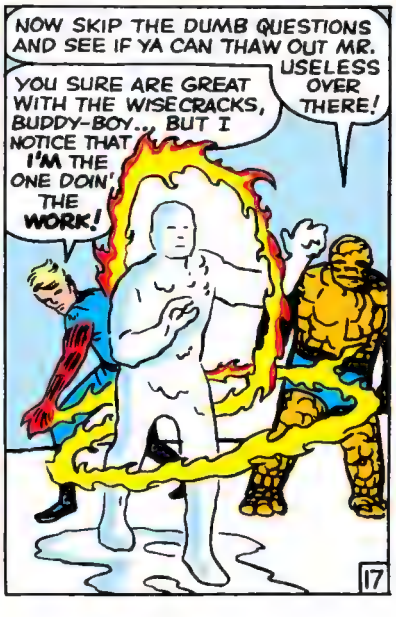
I KNEW IT! BY EXPOSING OURSELVES TO THE COSMIC RAYS FOR A LONGER TIME THAN THEY DID, WE HAVE BECOME EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN THE FANTASTIC FOUR!! THE WORLD IS OURS!!


AND NOW, MY FAITHFUL ORANGUTAN --ADJUST YOUR MAGNETIC POWERS TO ATTRACT A HUMAN BODY! GOOD! NOW THE GIRL CAN NEVER ESCAPE!
HE-HE IS HOLDING ME TO HIM MAGNETICALLY!! I CAN'T MOVE! I'M COMPLETELY HELPLESS!


BRING HER INTO THIS PNEUMATIC-POWERED CAR I HAVE FOUND! NOW YOU OTHERS, FOLLOW HIM IN! WE SHALL BE GONE WITH OUR PRISONER BEFORE OUR ENEMIES CAN FIND US!

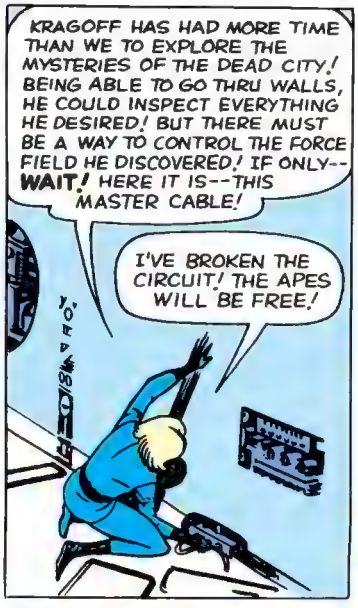

SECONDS LATER, USING A VEHICLE DESIGNED BY AN UNKNOWN, LONG-VANISHED RACE WHICH HAD ONCE INHABITED THE MOON, THE RED GHOST AND HIS SUPER-APES PLUNGE INTO AN UNDERGROUND CAVERN...


...WHILE ON THE SURFACE...
WHATCHA DOIN' UP THERE, BEN?
WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE, BIG BRAIN?? I'M WAITIN' FOR A TAXI!

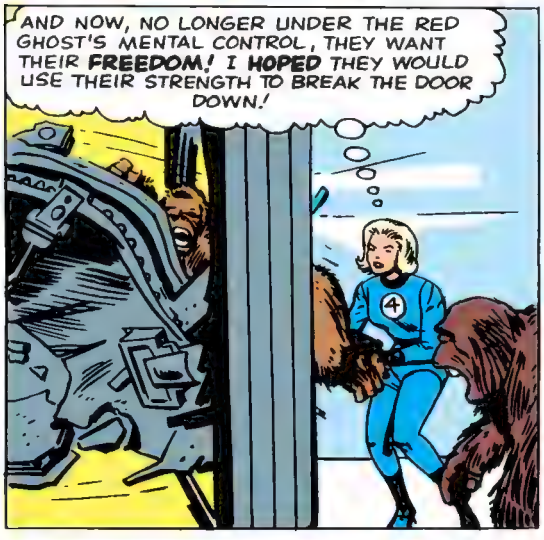

NOW SKIP THE DUMB QUESTIONS AND SEE IF YA CAN THAW OUT MR. USELESS OVER THERE!
YOU SURE ARE GREAT WITH THE WISECRACKS, BUDDY-BOY.., BUT I NOTICE THAT I'M THE ONE DOIN' THE WORK!

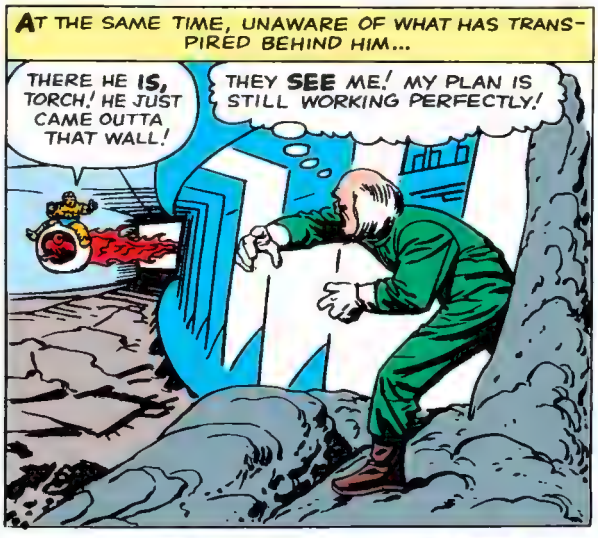
MINUTES LATER...
THANKS, FELLAS! I-I COULDN'T HAVE LASTED MUCH LONGER!
KRAGOFF AND HIS APES MADE OFF WITH SUE, REED! WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE??
BRO-THER!! THERE'S ANOTHER BRILLIANT QUESTION!!
WE WERE WRONG TO TACKLE THEM WITH BRUTE FORCE ALONE! THEY'RE AT LEAST AS STRONG AS WE ARE! WE'VE GOT TO FIND THEM AGAIN, AND THEN OUTSMART THEM!
IF THAT MEANS WE GOTTA USE OUR BRAINS, THEN THE TORCH BETTER STAY BEHIND!
AW, GO PLAY IN TRAFFIC, YOU BIG OX!
UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MISTER FANTASTIC, THE TORCH AND THE THING CREATE ANOTHER VEHICLE... ONE CAPABLE OF FOLLOWING THEIR QUARRY INTO THE DARK LABYRINTH!
WHY CAN'T WE FOLLOW 'EM WITHOUT THIS THING??
REED WANTS US TO SAVE OUR STRENGTH FOR WHEN WE'LL NEED IT! NOT THAT YOU GOT ANY TO SAVE, SQUIRT!
GOOD WORK, FELLAS! IT'S CRUDE, BUT IT'LL DO THE JOB!
YOU KIDDIN', PAL?? WHAT'LL WE USE FOR A MOTOR??
WE'VE GOT A READY-MADE MOTOR! TORCH, GET INSIDE THAT CYLINDER AND DO WHAT I TOLD YOU--
SUFFERIN' CATS!! HE TURNED YA INTO A HUMAN JET ENGINE!
REED'S GONNA FOLLOW ON FOOT! HE SAID HE HAS A PLAN--
BEN SAID KRAGOFF CAN'T BE TOUCHED-- CAN'T BE HARMED! I'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO DEFEAT HIM! PERHAPS AMONG ALL THESE SCIENTIFIC DEVICES FROM A DEAD CIVILIZATION, I CAN CREATE A WEAPON...
MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY...
I HAVE FREED YOU FROM THE MAGNETIC PULL, FOR YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FROM THIS CHAMBER! SEE HOW I KEEP MY SUPER-APES SEPARATED FROM THOSE PACKAGES OF FOOD BY A FORCE FIELD! THE HUNGRIER THEY ARE, THE MORE THEY OBEY ME!
NO MATTER HOW YOU GLOAT, REED, BEN AND THE TORCH WILL FIND YOU SOON, AND THEN...
BUT OF COURSE! I WANT THEM TO FIND ME! IN FACT, I SHALL GO NOW AND LURE THEM TO THIS SPOT!
ALTHOUGH THIS LOCKED DOOR WILL KEEP YOU A PRISONER, NOTHING CAN BAR THE WAY OF THE RED GHOST!

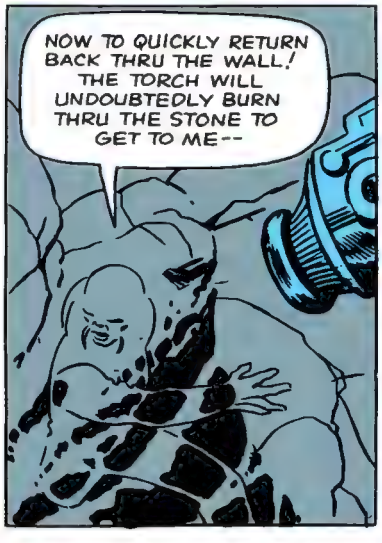
IF I COULD ONLY FIND A WAY TO ELIMINATE THIS FORCE FIELD--TO FREE THE SUPER-APES! I WOULD TAKE MY CHANCES WITH **THEM,** RATHER THAN THE **RED GHOST,** FOR THEY ARE LIKE THE COMMUNIST MASSES, INNOCENTLY ENSLAVED BY THEIR EVIL LEADERS!

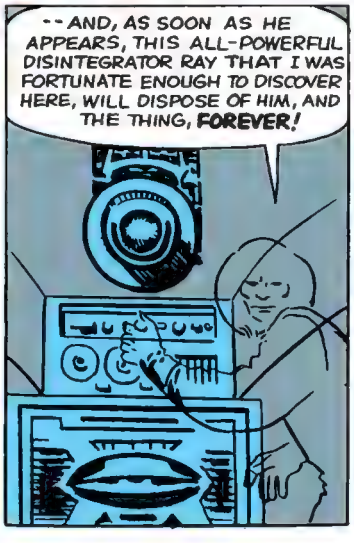

KRAGOFF HAS HAD MORE TIME THAN WE TO EXPLORE THE MYSTERIES OF THE DEAD CITY! BEING ABLE TO GO THRU WALLS, HE COULD INSPECT EVERYTHING HE DESIRED! BUT THERE MUST BE A WAY TO CONTROL THE FORCE FIELD HE DISCOVERED! IF ONLY--**WAIT!** HERE IT IS--THIS MASTER CABLE!
I'VE BROKEN THE CIRCUIT! THE APES WILL BE FREE!

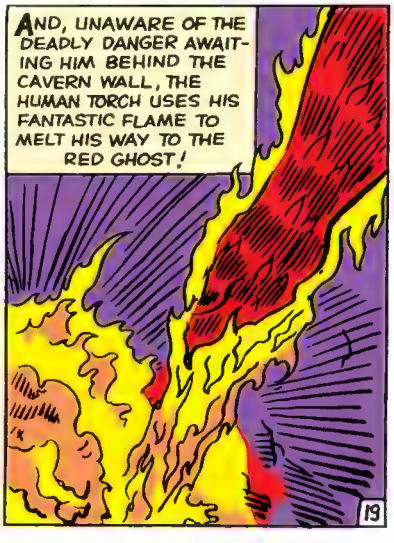
JUST AS I EXPECTED! THEY'RE SO RAVENOUSLY HUNGRY THAT THEY DON'T EVEN **NOTICE** ME IN THEIR FRANTIC ATTEMPT TO GET THE FOOD WHICH KRAGOFF HAD LEFT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FORCE SCREEN!
IT'S LUCKY FOR ME, BECAUSE TURNING INVISIBLE WOULDN'T SAVE ME FROM **THEM!** THEIR SENSE OF SMELL COULD DETECT ME AS EASILY AS THEIR EYES!

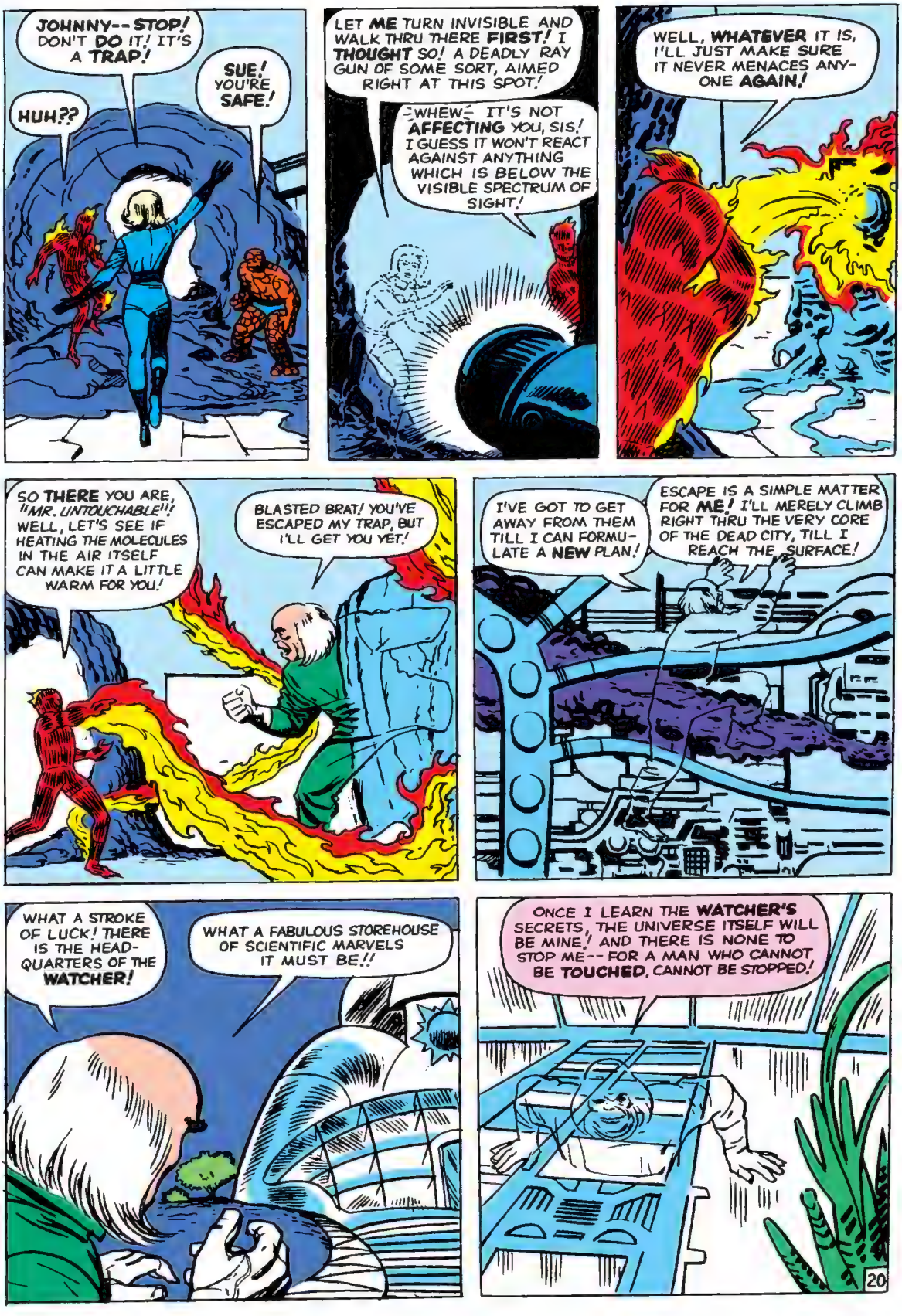

AND NOW, NO LONGER UNDER THE RED GHOST'S MENTAL CONTROL, THEY WANT THEIR **FREEDOM!** I **HOPED** THEY WOULD USE THEIR STRENGTH TO BREAK THE DOOR DOWN!


AT THE SAME TIME, UNAWARE OF WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED BEHIND HIM...
THERE HE **IS,** TORCH! HE JUST CAME OUTTA THAT WALL!
THEY **SEE** ME! MY PLAN IS STILL WORKING PERFECTLY!


NOW TO QUICKLY RETURN BACK THRU THE WALL! THE TORCH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BURN THRU THE STONE TO GET TO ME--


--AND, AS SOON AS HE APPEARS, THIS ALL-POWERFUL DISINTEGRATOR RAY THAT I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO DISCOVER HERE, WILL DISPOSE OF HIM, AND THE THING, **FOREVER!**


AND, UNAWARE OF THE DEADLY DANGER AWAITING HIM BEHIND THE CAVERN WALL, THE HUMAN TORCH USES HIS FANTASTIC FLAME TO MELT HIS WAY TO THE RED GHOST!
13


JOHNNY--STOP! DON'T DO IT! IT'S A TRAP!
HUH??
SUE! YOU'RE SAFE!
LET ME TURN INVISIBLE AND WALK THRU THERE FIRST! I THOUGHT SO! A DEADLY RAY GUN OF SOME SORT, AIMED RIGHT AT THIS SPOT!
=WHEW= IT'S NOT AFFECTING YOU, SIS! I GUESS IT WON'T REACT AGAINST ANYTHING WHICH IS BELOW THE VISIBLE SPECTRUM OF SIGHT!
WELL, WHATEVER IT IS, I'LL JUST MAKE SURE IT NEVER MENACES ANY-ONE AGAIN!
SO THERE YOU ARE, "MR. UNTOUCHABLE"! WELL, LET'S SEE IF HEATING THE MOLECULES IN THE AIR ITSELF CAN MAKE IT A LITTLE WARM FOR YOU!
BLASTED BRAT! YOU'VE ESCAPED MY TRAP, BUT I'LL GET YOU YET!
I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM THEM TILL I CAN FORMU-LATE A NEW PLAN!
ESCAPE IS A SIMPLE MATTER FOR ME! I'LL MERELY CLIMB RIGHT THRU THE VERY CORE OF THE DEAD CITY, TILL I REACH THE SURFACE!
WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK! THERE IS THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE WATCHER!
WHAT A FABULOUS STOREHOUSE OF SCIENTIFIC MARVELS IT MUST BE!!
ONCE I LEARN THE WATCHER'S SECRETS, THE UNIVERSE ITSELF WILL BE MINE! AND THERE IS NONE TO STOP ME-- FOR A MAN WHO CANNOT BE TOUCHED, CANNOT BE STOPPED!

BUT, AS THE RED GHOST LOOKS ABOUT HIM, IN THE STRANGE INTERIOR OF THE WATCHER'S DOMICILE, HE FINDS...
IT'S BEYOND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING! IT'S TOO ALIEN--TOO DIFFERENT! I-I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M LOOKING AT!

SUDDENLY, BEFORE THE INTRUDER'S STARTLED EYES, A VAST SHIMMERY SCREEN APPEARS, AND A DEEP, EMOTIONLESS VOICE FILLS THE HUSHED CHAMBER...
FOOLISH EARTHLING! YOU DARE DISTURB THE PRIVACY OF THE WATCHER??

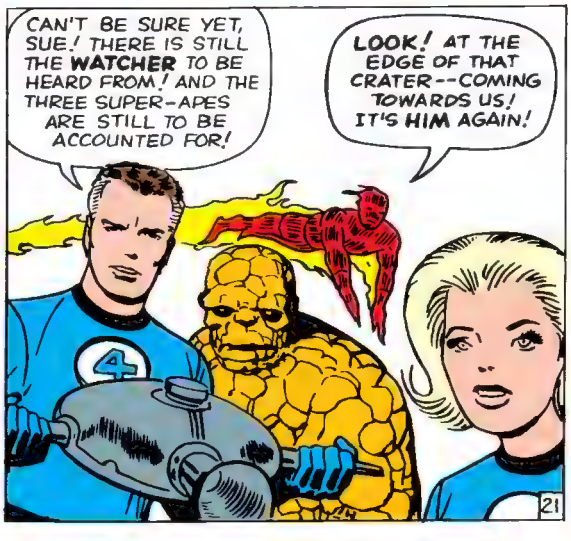
IN ONE BRIEF MICRO-SECOND, I CAN TRANSPORT YOU TO A PLACE IN LIMBO, WHERE YOU WOULD REMAIN THROUGHOUT ALL OF ETERNITY!

OR, BY EXPENDING THE SMALLEST AMOUNT OF MENTAL ENERGY, I CAN THROW YOU A MILLION YEARS INTO THE PAST!

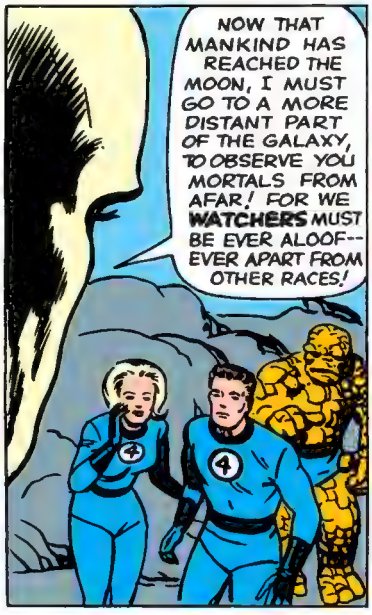
...OR EQUALLY AS FAR INTO THE DISTANT FUTURE, WHERE YOU WOULD WITNESS THE END OF ENTIRE GALAXIES!

BUT, A MERE HELPLESS HUMAN IS NOT WORTHY OF EVEN THAT MUCH EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE WATCHER, AND SO, I SIMPLY BRUSH YOU FROM MY PRESENCE, AS I WOULD DO TO A MEDDLESOME FLEA!
THERE HE IS! WE FOUND HIM!

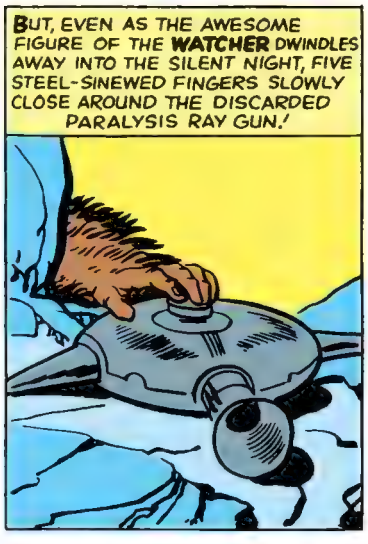
HEY! THAT GIZMO YOU PUT TOGETHER REALLY WORKS, CHUM! IT STOPPED THE RED GHOST DEAD IN HIS TRACKS!
I KNEW IT WOULD! I DESIGNED THIS PARALYSIS RAY TO OPERATE ON THE SAME MOLICULAR LEVEL AS HIS OWN ATOMIC BODY STRUCTURE!
IF HE'S HELPLESS--THEN WE--WE'VE WON!


CAN'T BE SURE YET, SUE! THERE IS STILL THE WATCHER TO BE HEARD FROM! AND THE THREE SUPER-APES ARE STILL TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR!
LOOK! AT THE EDGE OF THAT CRATER--COMING TOWARDS US! IT'S HIM AGAIN!

THE CONTEST IS OVER! YOU HAVE TRIUMPHED!
AND MY MISSION, TOO, IS AT AN END!


NOW THAT MANKIND HAS REACHED THE MOON, I MUST GO TO A MORE DISTANT PART OF THE GALAXY, TO OBSERVE YOU MORTALS FROM AFAR! FOR WE WATCHERS MUST BE EVER ALOOF--EVER APART FROM OTHER RACES!

BUT REMEMBER THIS WELL--NO MATTER WHERE YOU VOYAGE--NO MATTER HOW FAR YOU TRAVEL--TO WHATEVER REACHES OF THIS LIMITLESS UNIVERSE--YOU WILL NEVER BE--ALONE!
AND NOW, FAREWELL! SPACE IS YOUR HERITAGE--SEE THAT YOU PROVE WORTHY OF SUCH A GLORIOUS GIFT!


BUT, EVEN AS THE AWESOME FIGURE OF THE WATCHER DWINDLES AWAY INTO THE SILENT NIGHT, FIVE STEEL-SINEWED FINGERS SLOWLY CLOSE AROUND THE DISCARDED PARALYSIS RAY GUN.

WELL DONE, MY FAITHFUL SLAVES! YOU OBEYED MY MENTAL COMMANDS! YOU HAVE REVERSED THE PARALYSIS RAY CYCLE, FREEING ME!
NOW QUICKLY--HAND ME THE WEAPON, AND TOGETHER WE SHALL WIPE OUT OUR UNSUSPECTING ENEMIES!

WAIT! WHY ARE YOU STARING AT ME THAT WAY? AIMING THE RAY AT ME?? YOUR EYES--THEY'RE GLEAMING WITH HATRED--WITH VENGEANCE!
STAY BACK! DO YOU HEAR ME? I AM YOUR MASTER! I MADE YOU WHAT YOU ARE! STAY BACK!
IT'S NO USE! I CAN'T CONTROL THEM! AND AS LONG AS HE HOLDS THE PARALYSIS RAY, I'M AT HIS MERCY!

LOOK! THE SUPER-APES ARE CHASING THE RED GHOST AWAY! THEY'RE ATTACKING THEIR OWN LEADER!
LUCKY FOR US THAT THEY ARE! IF THEY EVER RE-UNITE, THE COMBINATION OF THEIR SUPER-POWERS MIGHT BE ENOUGH TO DEFEAT OUR OWN!

KNOCK IT OFF, REED! YOU SOUND LIKE THE VOICE OF DOOM! WE CAN BEAT ANYBODY--AND YOU KNOW IT!
I WON'T ARGUE, BEN! WE'RE PROBABLY BETTER OFF IF WE ALL FEEL THAT WAY!

AND NOW, WE'LL RETURN TO EARTH AND PRESENT OUR FULLY TESTED ROCKET FUEL TO THE NATIONAL SPACE AGENCY! OUR MISSION TO THE MOON IS FINISHED!
IT'LL BE GREAT TO GET HOME! WE CAN SURE USE A REST!
BUT, UNKNOWN TO OUR FOUR WEARY FRIENDS, THEY ARE HEADING INTO A STILL MORE FANTASTIC ADVENTURE... FOR THEY ARE ABOUT TO AGAIN CROSS THE PATH OF TWO OF THE MOST DANGEROUS FOES THEY'VE EVER FACED--THE MIGHTY SUB-MARINER AND THE SINISTER PUPPET MASTER! BUT, THAT'S A TALE FOR NEXT ISSUE...

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE Fantastic Four
14 MAY
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
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HOW MUCH ACTION, HOW MUCH DRAMA DO YOU CRAVE?? BE ON HAND WHEN...
"the SUB-MARINER STRIKES!"
AT LAST WE MEET AGAIN!! BUT THIS TIME... ON MY TERMS!!
UNDERSEA MONARCH VERSUS AMERICA'S GREATEST SUPER-HEROES!
PLUS THE SURPRISE RETURN OF ANOTHER FORMER VILLAIN!
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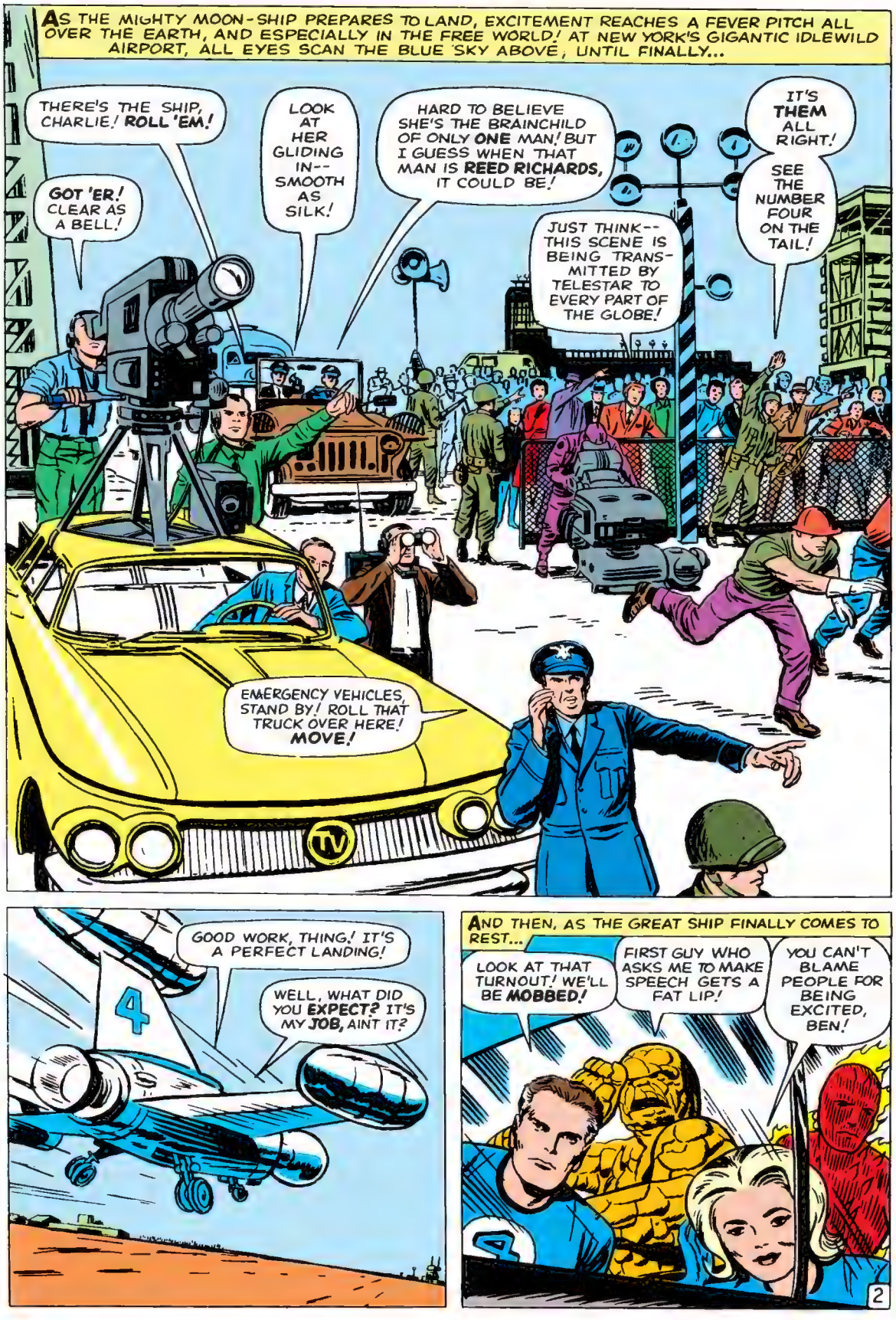
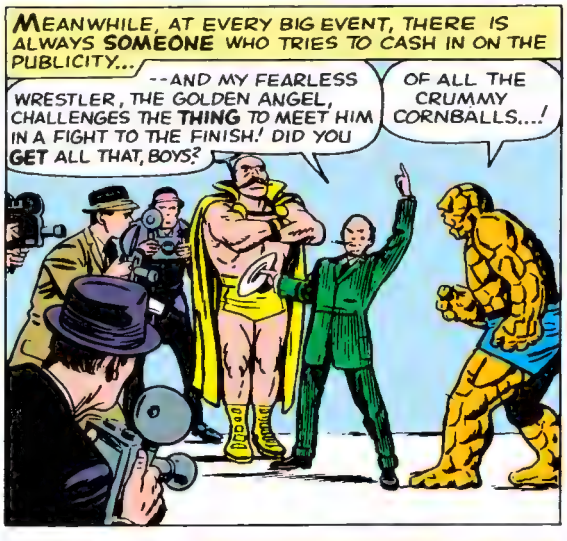
ONCE AGAIN, THE FANTASTIC FOUR FACE THE THREAT OF:
SUB-MARINER, and
"THE MERCILESS PUPPET MASTER"
PART 1
HAVING DEFEATED THE RED GHOST ON THE MOON LAST ISSUE, THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SUPER-HERO TEAM HEADS FOR HOME AND NEW ADVENTURE!
SCRIPT.....STAN LEE
ART.....JACK KIRBY
INKING.....DICK AYERS
LETTERING..ART SIMEK
MOVE, BUTTERFINGERS! I'LL TAKE OVER THE CONTROLS NOW! IT'S ALMOST TIME TO LAND THIS CRATE!
I'M GRABBIN' FORTY WINKS! WAKE ME WHEN WE'VE LANDED!
OKAY, PARTNER! BUT THE WAY I DESIGNED THIS BIRD, SHE CAN PRACTICALLY LAND BY HERSELF!
WE'VE JUST RECEIVED RADIO LANDING CLEARANCE!
X-144
WONDER IF WE'LL RECEIVE MUCH OF AN OVATION WHEN WE LAND, REED?
AS THE FIRST EARTHMEN TO RETURN FROM A ROUND TRIP TO THE MOON? YOU CAN BET ON IT, LADY!
ALL AIR TRAFFIC HALTED WITHIN THOUSAND-MILE PERIMETER! FANTASTIC FOUR--LAND AT WILL!
HERE THEY COME!
THEY MADE IT! THEY REALLY MADE IT!

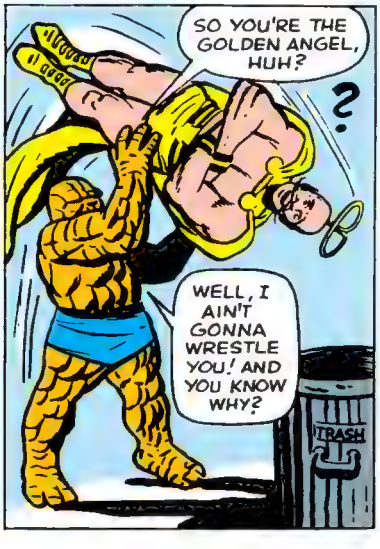

AS THE MIGHTY MOON-SHIP PREPARES TO LAND, EXCITEMENT REACHES A FEVER PITCH ALL OVER THE EARTH, AND ESPECIALLY IN THE FREE WORLD! AT NEW YORK'S GIGANTIC IDLEWILD AIRPORT, ALL EYES SCAN THE BLUE SKY ABOVE, UNTIL FINALLY...
THERE'S THE SHIP, CHARLIE! ROLL 'EM!
GOT 'ER! CLEAR AS A BELL!
LOOK AT HER GLIDING IN-- SMOOTH AS SILK!
HARD TO BELIEVE SHE'S THE BRAINCHILD OF ONLY ONE MAN! BUT I GUESS WHEN THAT MAN IS REED RICHARDS, IT COULD BE!
JUST THINK-- THIS SCENE IS BEING TRANSMITTED BY TELESTAR TO EVERY PART OF THE GLOBE!
IT'S THEM ALL RIGHT!
SEE THE NUMBER FOUR ON THE TAIL!
EMERGENCY VEHICLES, STAND BY! ROLL THAT TRUCK OVER HERE! MOVE!
TV
GOOD WORK, THING! IT'S A PERFECT LANDING!
WELL, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? IT'S MY JOB, AINT IT?
4
AND THEN, AS THE GREAT SHIP FINALLY COMES TO REST...
LOOK AT THAT TURNOUT! WE'LL BE MOBBED!
FIRST GUY WHO ASKS ME TO MAKE SPEECH GETS A FAT LIP!
YOU CAN'T BLAME PEOPLE FOR BEING EXCITED, BEN!
2

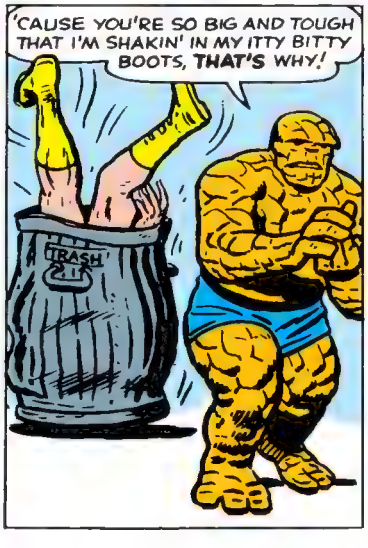
=ULP=
WHAT A MOB! MAYBE IF I FLAME OFF, I CAN LOSE MYSELF IN THE CROWD!
SURE, WITH A MILLION CAMERAS ON YOU, AND WEARIN' THAT BRIGHT BLUE GET-UP, YOU'RE GONNA LOSE YOURSELF! WHAT DO YOU USE FOR A BRAIN, SQUIRT?

LOOK! THERE HE IS! IT'S MR. FANTASTIC!
SARGE--HELP! I CAN'T HOLD THESE NUTTY FEMALES BACK!
I'D DIE FOR A LOCK OF HIS HAIR!
NOW, GIRLS--TAKE IT EASY! LET'S NOT LOSE OUR DIGNITY!
THAT VOICE! THOSE EYES! THOSE SHOULDERS! HE'S TOO MUCH!
MISTER FANTASTIC FAN CLUB
CLAYVILLE CHAPTER

TWO RIVAL FAN CLUBS FIGHTIN' OVER MR. FANTASTIC! WHAT A SHOT!
WE SAW HIM FIRST!
=FLASH!
HE'S OURS!
FAN CLUB


MEANWHILE, AT EVERY BIG EVENT, THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE WHO TRIES TO CASH IN ON THE PUBLICITY...
--AND MY FEARLESS WRESTLER, THE GOLDEN ANGEL, CHALLENGES THE THING TO MEET HIM IN A FIGHT TO THE FINISH! DID YOU GET ALL THAT, BOYS?
OF ALL THE CRUMMY CORNBALLS...!


SO YOU'RE THE GOLDEN ANGEL, HUH?
?
WELL, I AIN'T GONNA WRESTLE YOU! AND YOU KNOW WHY?
TRASH

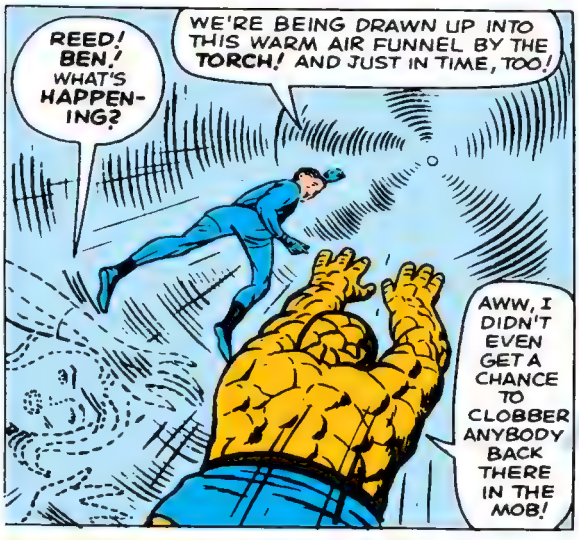

'CAUSE YOU'RE SO BIG AND TOUGH THAT I'M SHAKIN' IN MY ITTY BITTY BOOTS, THAT'S WHY!
TRASH

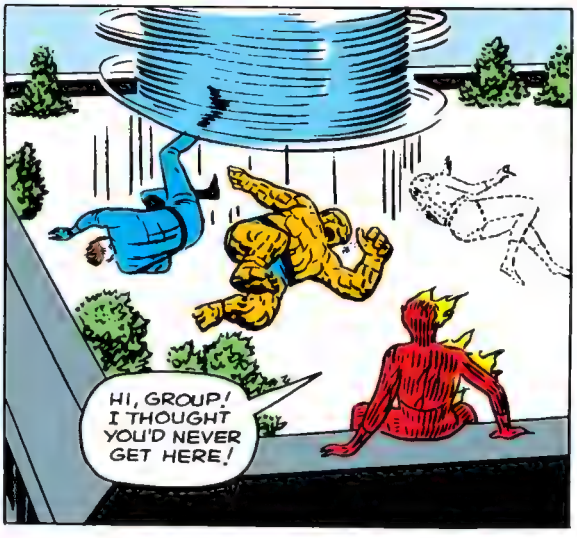
SUE STORM, TOO, HAS HER PROBLEMS...
BUT YOU CAN'T TURN DOWN A CHANCE LIKE THIS! A LIFETIME HOLLYWOOD CONTRACT!
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM! I'M PREPARED TO PAY YOU A FORTUNE TO ENDORSE OUR DEODORANT ON TV!

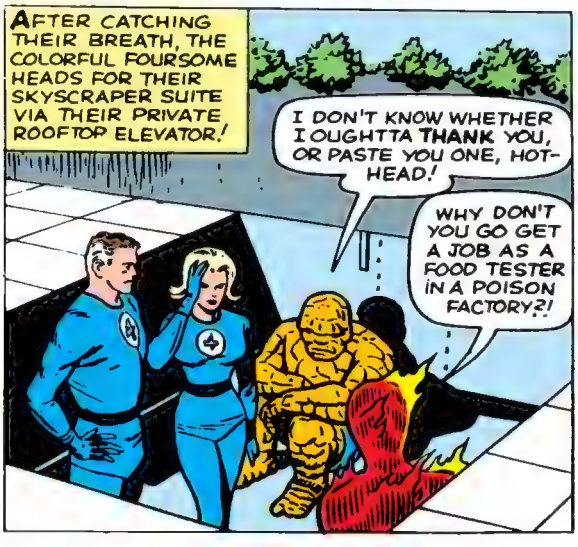
WHERE DID SHE GO?
SHE MUST HAVE TURNED INVISIBLE!
SOME PEOPLE JUST HAVE NO GRATITUDE!

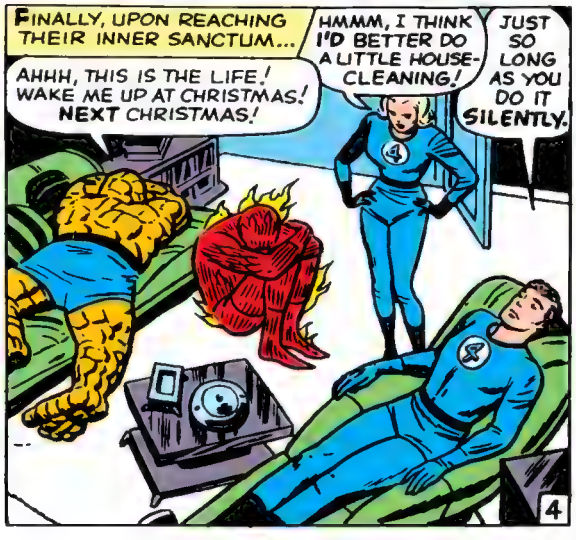
AT THAT MOMENT, HIGH OVER THE AIRPORT, A STRANGE, WARM-AIR FUNNEL SUDDENLY APPEARS, HOVERING OVER SUE, REED, AND THE THING...
ONLY ONE WAY TO GET MY LI'L PARTNERS AWAY FROM THAT MOB!

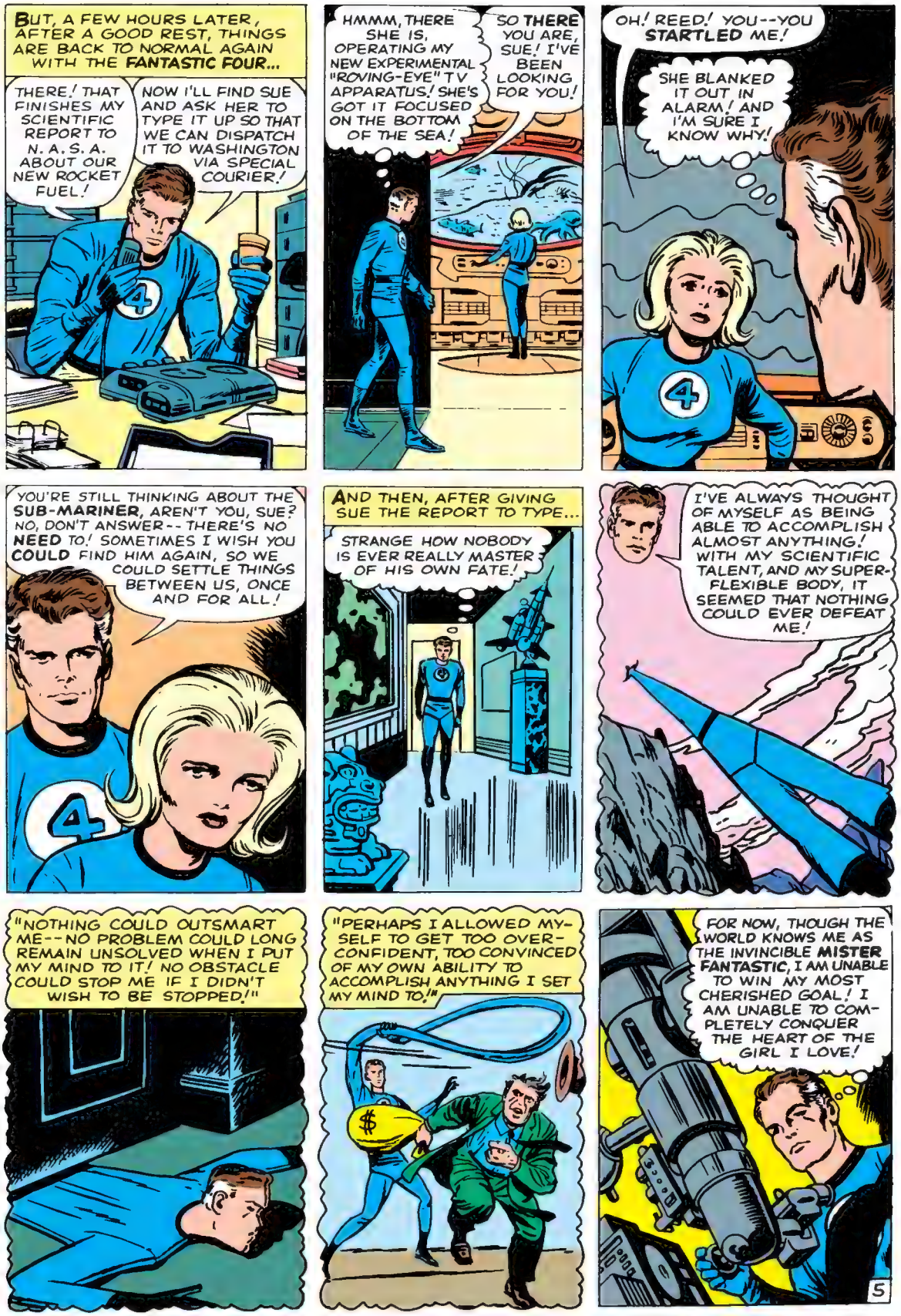
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO TRY THIS LITTLE GIMMICK! THE WHIRLING WARM AIR FORMS A SUCTION IN A VACUUM, AND THEN...

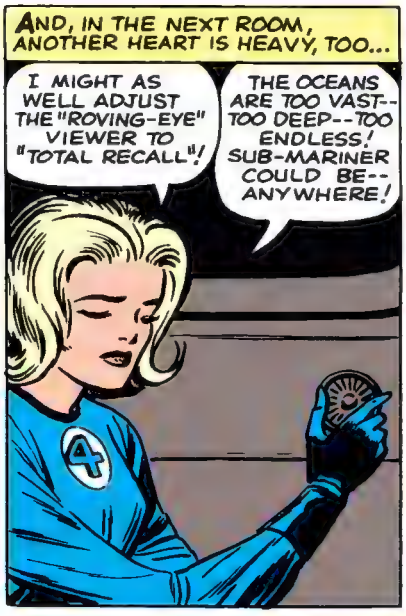

REED! BEN! WHAT'S HAPPENING?
WE'RE BEING DRAWN UP INTO THIS WARM AIR FUNNEL BY THE TORCH! AND JUST IN TIME, TOO!
AWW, I DIDN'T EVEN GET A CHANCE TO CLOBBER ANYBODY BACK THERE IN THE MOB!

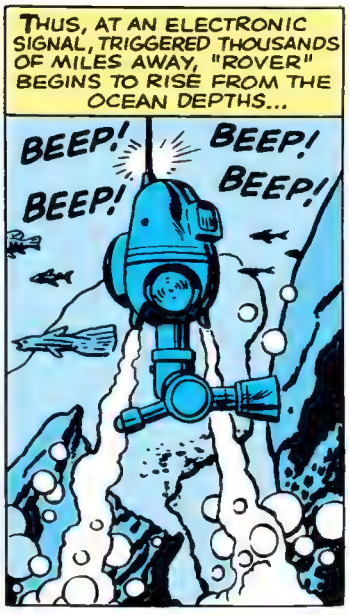

HI, GROUP! I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER GET HERE!

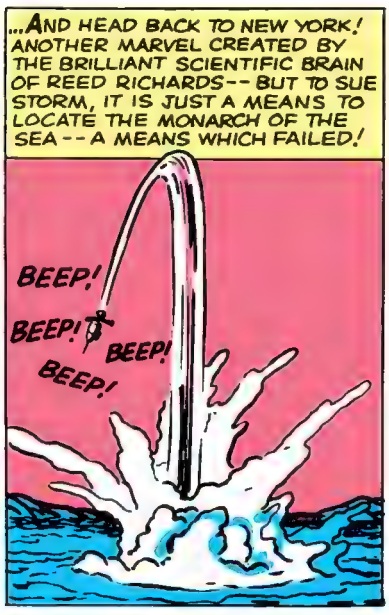

AFTER CATCHING THEIR BREATH, THE COLORFUL FOURSOME HEADS FOR THEIR SKYSCRAPER SUITE VIA THEIR PRIVATE ROOFTOP ELEVATOR!
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I OUGHTTA THANK YOU, OR PASTE YOU ONE, HOT-HEAD!
WHY DON'T YOU GO GET A JOB AS A FOOD TESTER IN A POISON FACTORY?!

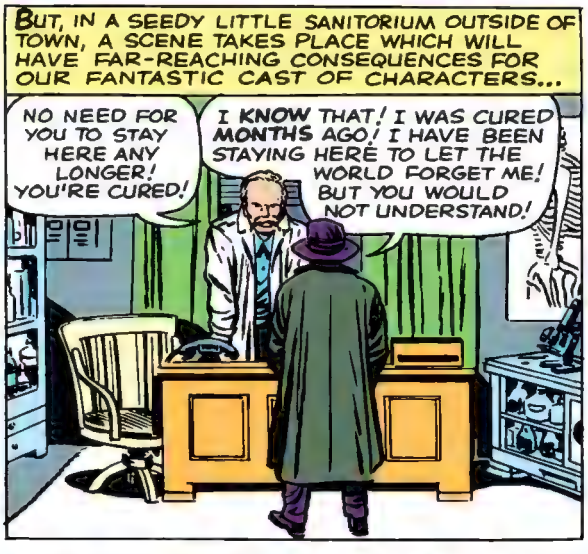

FINALLY, UPON REACHING THEIR INNER SANCTUM...
AHHH, THIS IS THE LIFE! WAKE ME UP AT CHRISTMAS! NEXT CHRISTMAS!
HMMM, I THINK I'D BETTER DO A LITTLE HOUSE-CLEANING!
JUST SO LONG AS YOU DO IT SILENTLY.
4

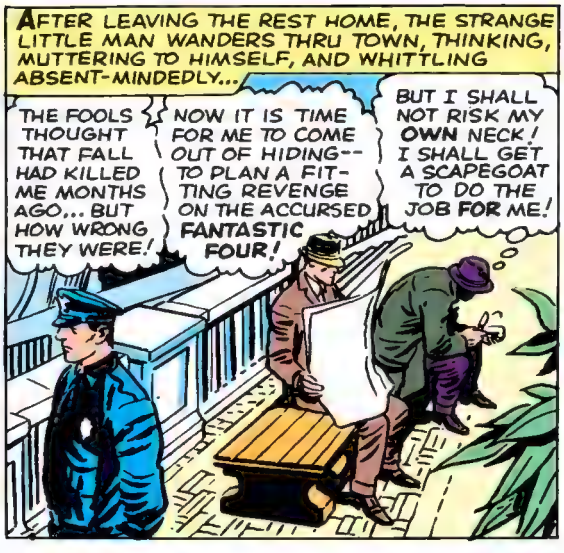

BUT, A FEW HOURS LATER, AFTER A GOOD REST, THINGS ARE BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR...
THERE! THAT FINISHES MY SCIENTIFIC REPORT TO N. A. S. A. ABOUT OUR NEW ROCKET FUEL!
NOW I'LL FIND SUE AND ASK HER TO TYPE IT UP SO THAT WE CAN DISPATCH IT TO WASHINGTON VIA SPECIAL COURIER!
HMMM, THERE SHE IS, OPERATING MY NEW EXPERIMENTAL "ROVING-EYE" TV APPARATUS! SHE'S GOT IT FOCUSED ON THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA!
SO THERE YOU ARE, SUE! I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
OH! REED! YOU--YOU STARTLED ME!
SHE BLANKED IT OUT IN ALARM! AND I'M SURE I KNOW WHY!
YOU'RE STILL THINKING ABOUT THE SUB-MARINER, AREN'T YOU, SUE? NO, DON'T ANSWER-- THERE'S NO NEED TO! SOMETIMES I WISH YOU COULD FIND HIM AGAIN, SO WE COULD SETTLE THINGS BETWEEN US, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
AND THEN, AFTER GIVING SUE THE REPORT TO TYPE...
STRANGE HOW NOBODY IS EVER REALLY MASTER OF HIS OWN FATE!
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS BEING ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH ALMOST ANYTHING! WITH MY SCIENTIFIC TALENT, AND MY SUPER-FLEXIBLE BODY, IT SEEMED THAT NOTHING COULD EVER DEFEAT ME!
"NOTHING COULD OUTSMART ME--NO PROBLEM COULD LONG REMAIN UNSOLVED WHEN I PUT MY MIND TO IT! NO OBSTACLE COULD STOP ME IF I DIDN'T WISH TO BE STOPPED!"
"PERHAPS I ALLOWED MY-SELF TO GET TOO OVER-CONFIDENT, TOO CONVINCED OF MY OWN ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING I SET MY MIND TO!"
FOR NOW, THOUGH THE WORLD KNOWS ME AS THE INVINCIBLE MISTER FANTASTIC, I AM UNABLE TO WIN MY MOST CHERISHED GOAL! I AM UNABLE TO COM-PLETELY CONQUER THE HEART OF THE GIRL I LOVE!
5


AND, IN THE NEXT ROOM, ANOTHER HEART IS HEAVY, TOO...
I MIGHT AS WELL ADJUST THE "ROVING-EYE" VIEWER TO "TOTAL RECALL"!
THE OCEANS ARE TOO VAST--TOO DEEP--TOO ENDLESS! SUB-MARINER COULD BE--ANYWHERE!


THUS, AT AN ELECTRONIC SIGNAL, TRIGGERED THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY, "ROVER" BEGINS TO RISE FROM THE OCEAN DEPTHS...
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!


...AND HEAD BACK TO NEW YORK! ANOTHER MARVEL CREATED BY THE BRILLIANT SCIENTIFIC BRAIN OF REED RICHARDS--BUT TO SUE STORM, IT IS JUST A MEANS TO LOCATE THE MONARCH OF THE SEA--A MEANS WHICH FAILED!
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!

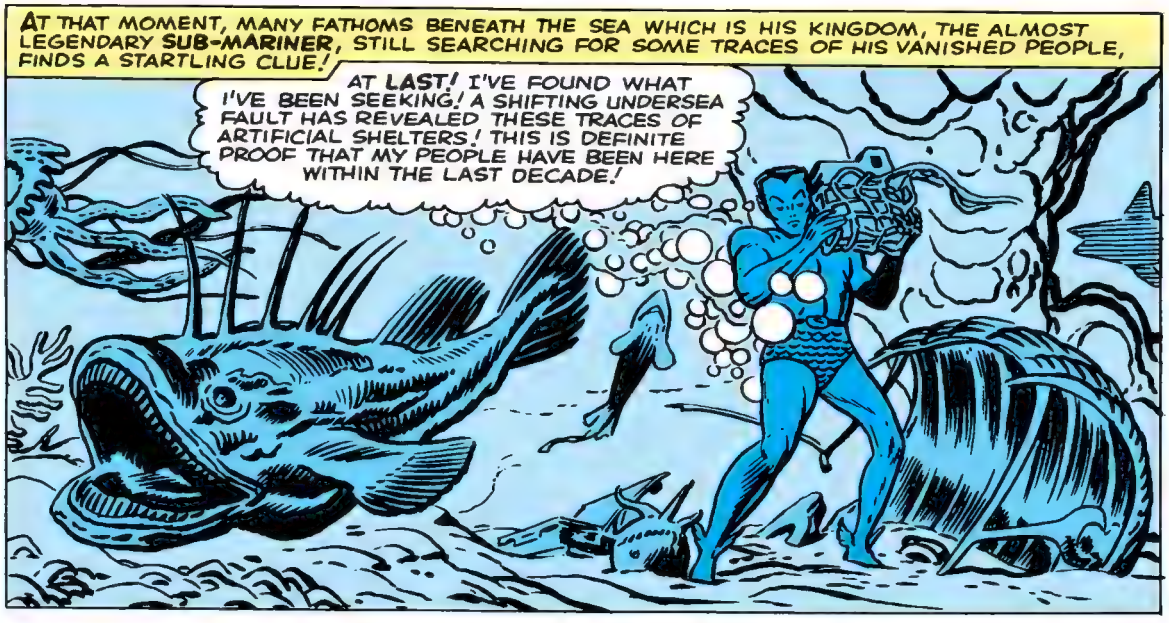

BUT, IN A SEEDY LITTLE SANITORIUM OUTSIDE OF TOWN, A SCENE TAKES PLACE WHICH WILL HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR FANTASTIC CAST OF CHARACTERS...
NO NEED FOR YOU TO STAY HERE ANY LONGER! YOU'RE CURED!
I KNOW THAT! I WAS CURED MONTHS AGO! I HAVE BEEN STAYING HERE TO LET THE WORLD FORGET ME! BUT YOU WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND!


AFTER LEAVING THE REST HOME, THE STRANGE LITTLE MAN WANDERS THRU TOWN, THINKING, MUTTERING TO HIMSELF, AND WHITTLING ABSENT-MINDEDLY...
THE FOOLS THOUGHT THAT FALL HAD KILLED ME MONTHS AGO... BUT HOW WRONG THEY WERE!
NOW IT IS TIME FOR ME TO COME OUT OF HIDING--TO PLAN A FITTING REVENGE ON THE ACCURSED FANTASTIC FOUR!
BUT I SHALL NOT RISK MY OWN NECK! I SHALL GET A SCAPEGOAT TO DO THE JOB FOR ME!

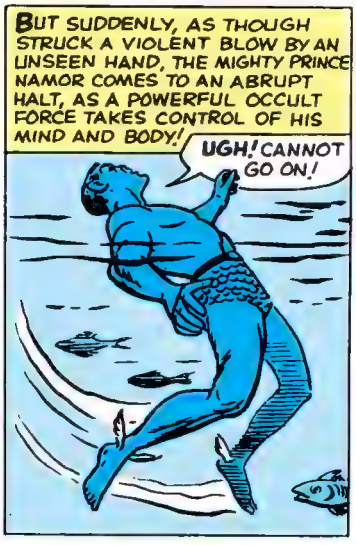
BUT WHOM SHALL I USE? PERHAPS SOME OLD ENEMY FROM THEIR OWN PAST!
PERHAPS THE MOLE MAN... OR ONE OF THE ALIEN SKRULLS?

NO! THE FOURSOME BEAT THEM ONCE, AND THEY MIGHT DO IT AGAIN!
DOCTOR DOOM ONCE FOUGHT THEM TO A STANDSTILL, BUT IT IS SAID HE HAS VANISHED FROM THE EARTH!

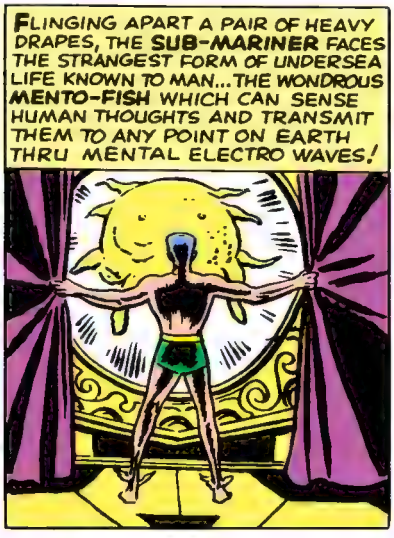
WAIT! I HAVE IT! THE IDEAL TOOL FOR MY MASTER HANDS! THE MIGHTY SUB-MARINER! IT IS HE WHO SHALL DO THE BIDDING OF--THE PUPPET MASTER!

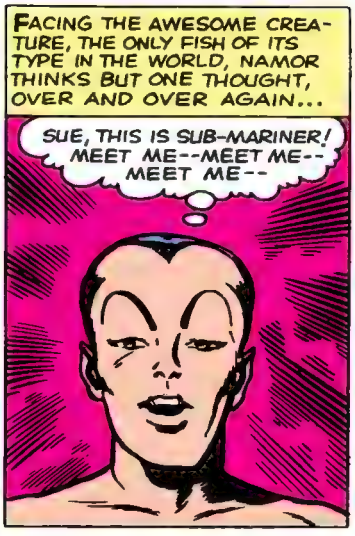

AT THAT MOMENT, MANY FATHOMS BENEATH THE SEA WHICH IS HIS KINGDOM, THE ALMOST LEGENDARY SUB-MARINER, STILL SEARCHING FOR SOME TRACES OF HIS VANISHED PEOPLE, FINDS A STARTLING CLUE!
AT LAST! I'VE FOUND WHAT I'VE BEEN SEEKING! A SHIFTING UNDERSEA FAULT HAS REVEALED THESE TRACES OF ARTIFICIAL SHELTERS! THIS IS DEFINITE PROOF THAT MY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HERE WITHIN THE LAST DECADE!

I MUST FOLLOW THE TRAIL! NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES, I MUST FIND MY RACE! I MUST CLAIM MY ROYAL HERITAGE!

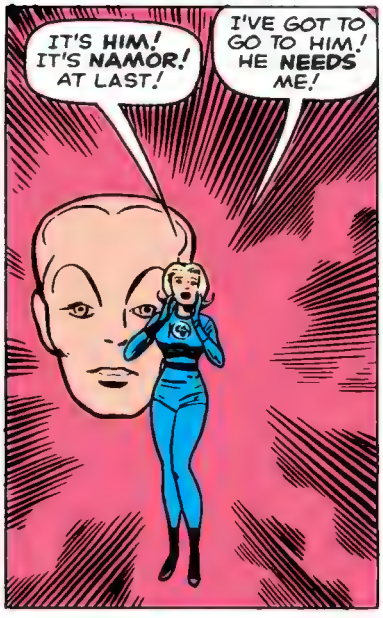

BUT SUDDENLY, AS THOUGH STRUCK A VIOLENT BLOW BY AN UNSEEN HAND, THE MIGHTY PRINCE NAMOR COMES TO AN ABRUPT HALT, AS A POWERFUL OCCULT FORCE TAKES CONTROL OF HIS MIND AND BODY!
UGH! CANNOT GO ON!

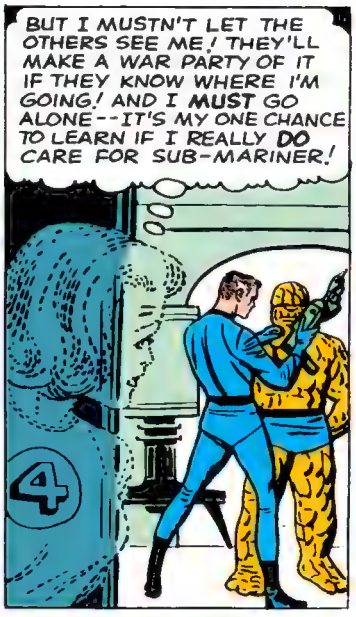
LIKE A MAN IN A TRANCE, HE RETURNS TO HIS HIDDEN HEADQUARTERS, LOOKING NEITHER LEFT NOR RIGHT...
MUST RETURN--MUST PERFORM A MISSION--CANNOT DISOBEY--THE PUPPET MASTER COMMANDS IT!


FLINGING APART A PAIR OF HEAVY DRAPES, THE SUB-MARINER FACES THE STRANGEST FORM OF UNDERSEA LIFE KNOWN TO MAN...THE WONDROUS MENTO-FISH WHICH CAN SENSE HUMAN THOUGHTS AND TRANSMIT THEM TO ANY POINT ON EARTH THRU MENTAL ELECTRO WAVES!


FACING THE AWESOME CREATURE, THE ONLY FISH OF ITS TYPE IN THE WORLD, NAMOR THINKS BUT ONE THOUGHT, OVER AND OVER AGAIN...
SUE, THIS IS SUB-MARINER! MEET ME--MEET ME--MEET ME--

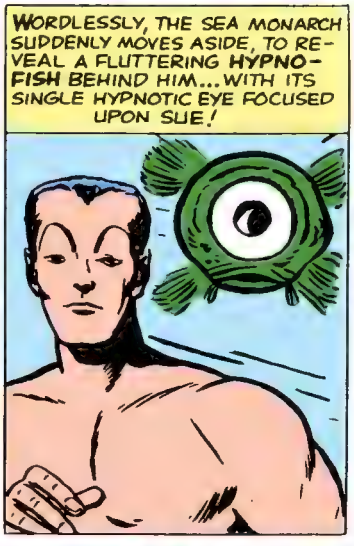
AND, LIKE AN INSISTANT VOICE, WHISPERING IN HER EAR, SUE HEARS...
--SUB-MARINER--MEET ME--MEET ME--MEET ME--
4

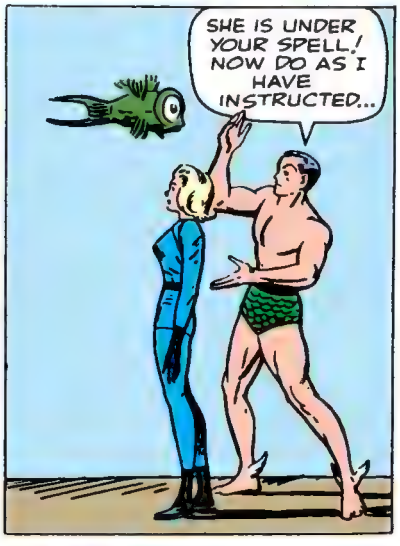

IT'S HIM! IT'S NAMOR! AT LAST!
I'VE GOT TO GO TO HIM! HE NEEDS ME!


BUT I MUSTN'T LET THE OTHERS SEE ME! THEY'LL MAKE A WAR PARTY OF IT IF THEY KNOW WHERE I'M GOING! AND I MUST GO ALONE--IT'S MY ONE CHANCE TO LEARN IF I REALLY DO CARE FOR SUB-MARINER!
4

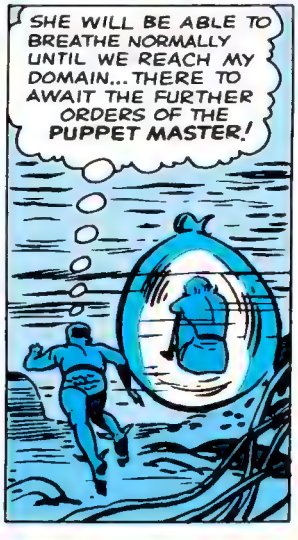
FOLLOWING THE SILENT INSTRUCTIONS WHISPERED IN HER BRAIN, SUE FINALLY FINDS HERSELF AT A DESERTED PIER, ON NEW YORK'S LOWER EAST SIDE...
I'LL REMAIN INVISIBLE UNTIL I MAKE CERTAIN IT ISN'T A TRICK, OR A TRAP!
NO! IT CAN'T BE A TRAP! IT'S HIM! I'D KNOW HIM ANYWHERE!

NAMOR! I'VE COME! I--
WHY DON'T YOU SPEAK? WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING?


WORDLESSLY, THE SEA MONARCH SUDDENLY MOVES ASIDE, TO REVEAL A FLUTTERING HYPNO-FISH BEHIND HIM...WITH ITS SINGLE HYPNOTIC EYE FOCUSED UPON SUE!


SHE IS UNDER YOUR SPELL! NOW DO AS I HAVE INSTRUCTED...

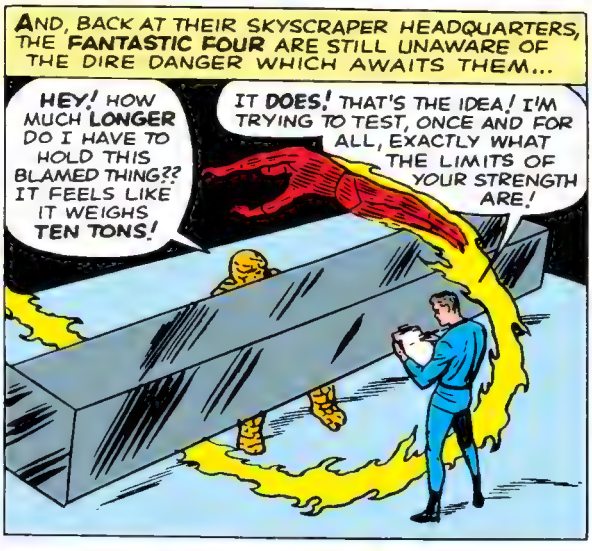
AT NAMOR'S COMMAND, THE AMAZING CREATURE FORMS A HUGE AIR BUBBLE AROUND THE DOCILE FIGURE OF SUE STORM! AND THEN...
INTO THE SEA WITH HER!


SHE WILL BE ABLE TO BREATHE NORMALLY UNTIL WE REACH MY DOMAIN...THERE TO AWAIT THE FURTHER ORDERS OF THE PUPPET MASTER!

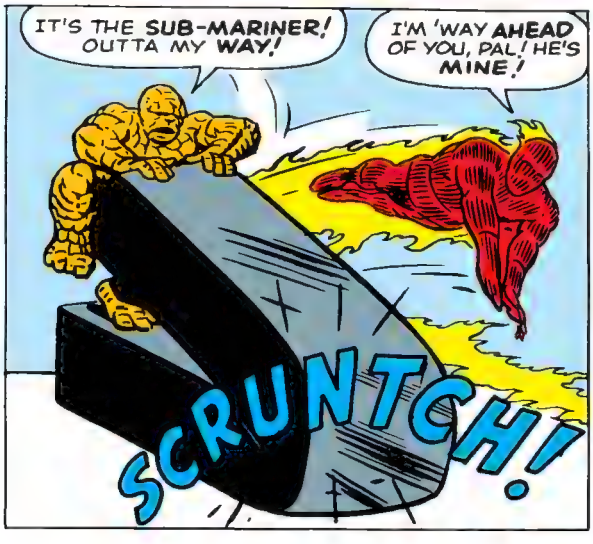
AND SO, HAVING BLINDLY FOLLOWED HER HEART, THE INVISIBLE GIRL HAS UNWITTINGLY SET THE STAGE FOR ONE OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST DANGEROUS ADVENTURES, AS A GRINNING FIGURE GLOATS OVER THE SUCCESS OF HIS VENGEFUL PLAN!
AND NOW --IT IS TIME FOR STEP TWO!

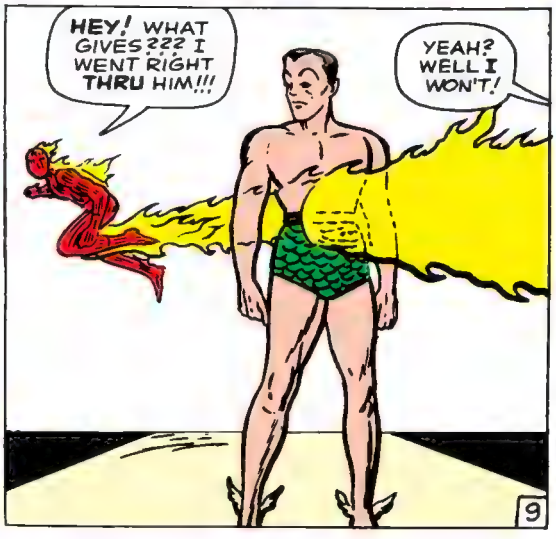
BACK IN HIS HIDEOUT, THE PUPPET MASTER DONS A LEAD-LINED SUIT, AND...
AS LONG AS THIS RADIO-ACTIVE CLAY HOLDS OUT, I AM COMPLETE MASTER OF ANY LIVING CREATURE WHOSE FORM I MOLD INTO A PUPPET!

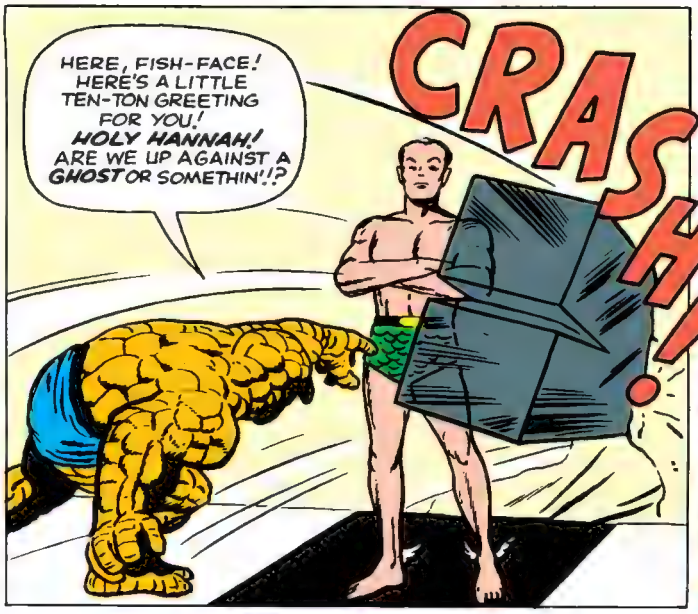
THEN, AFTER THE CLAY HAS BEEN TREATED AND COATED WITH A THIN FILM OF LEAD PAINT...
MY REVENGE WILL BE MUCH SWEETER IF I DO NOT MANIP-ULATE THE FANTASTIC FOUR! INSTEAD, I SHALL LEAVE THEM THEIR FREE WILL, WHILE THE SUB-MARINER, UNDER MY CONTROL, DEFEATS THEM!


AND, BACK AT THEIR SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS, THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE STILL UNAWARE OF THE DIRE DANGER WHICH AWAITS THEM...
HEY! HOW MUCH LONGER DO I HAVE TO HOLD THIS BLAMED THING?? IT FEELS LIKE IT WEIGHS TEN TONS!
IT DOES! THAT'S THE IDEA! I'M TRYING TO TEST, ONCE AND FOR ALL, EXACTLY WHAT THE LIMITS OF YOUR STRENGTH ARE!

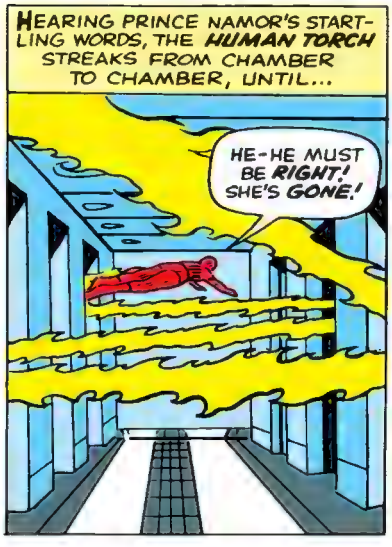
WELL, TELL THAT BLAZING BRAT TO STOP PLAYIN' HIDE-AND-SEEK AROUND ME, OR I'LL SHOVE THIS OVER-SIZED TOOTHPICK DOWN HIS THROAT!
AW, I'M JUST TRYIN' TO SEE WHAT-- HEY! LOOK! LOOK WHO'S THERE!


IT'S THE SUB-MARINER! OUTTA MY WAY!
I'M 'WAY AHEAD OF YOU, PAL! HE'S MINE!
SCRUNTCH!


HEY! WHAT GIVES??? I WENT RIGHT THRU HIM!!!
YEAH? WELL I WON'T!

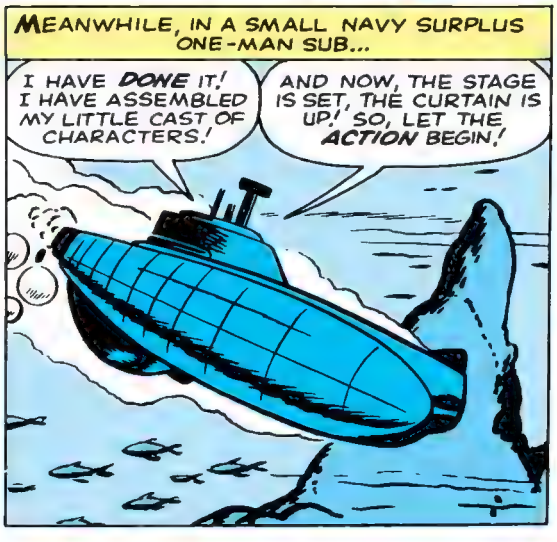

HERE, FISH-FACE! HERE'S A LITTLE TEN-TON GREETING FOR YOU!
HOLY HANNAH! ARE WE UP AGAINST A GHOST OR SOMETHIN'!?
CRASH!

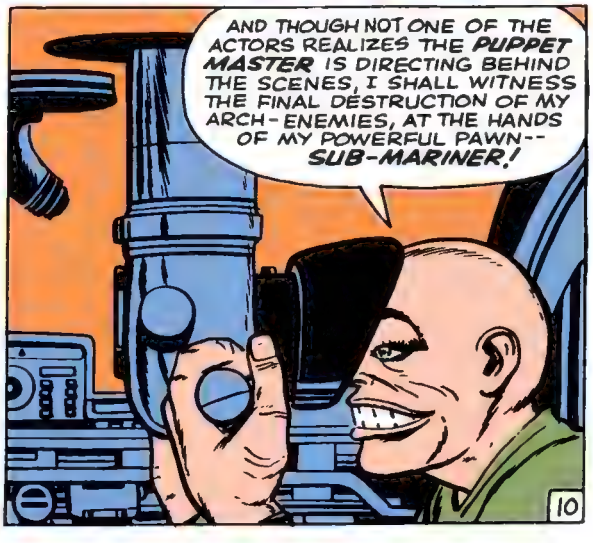
EASY, BEN! THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE! THAT ISN'T SUB-MARINER AT ALL! IT'S JUST A MENTAL PROJECTION OF HIM! REMEMBER? THAT'S ONE OF HIS POWERS, THRU THE USE OF AN UNDERSEA IMAGE TRANSMITTER!
AND I HAVE COME TO TELL YOU THAT THE INVISIBLE GIRL IS MY PRISONER!

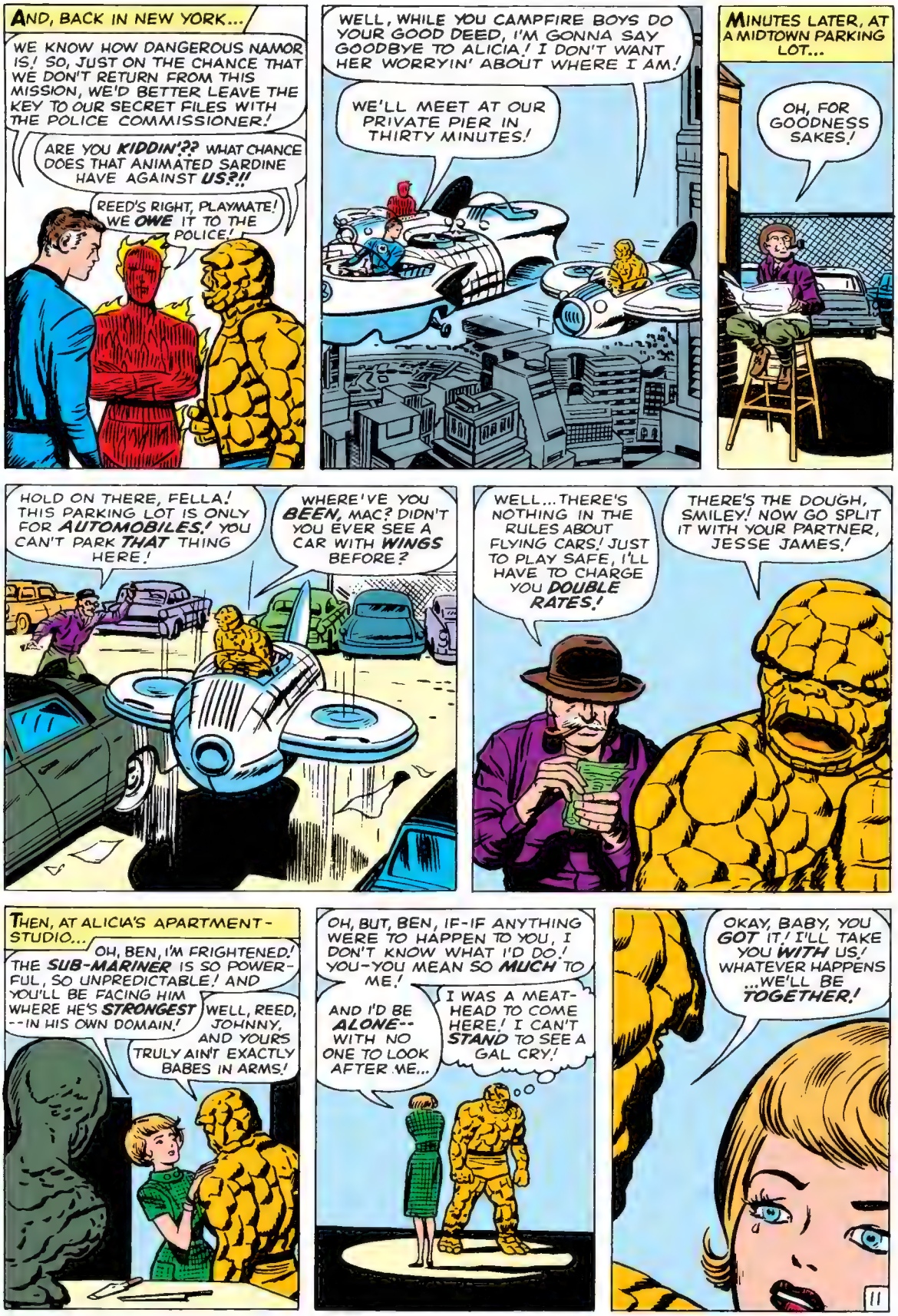

HEARING PRINCE NAMOR'S STARTLING WORDS, THE HUMAN TORCH STREAKS FROM CHAMBER TO CHAMBER, UNTIL...
HE-HE MUST BE RIGHT! SHE'S GONE!

AND NOW, AS MY IMAGE FADES AWAY, I FLING THIS CHALLENGE AT YOU! I DEFY ALL OF YOU TO INVADE MY UNDERSEA REALM AND ATTEMPT TO RESCUE SUE STORM! FOR IF YOU DO, I SHALL DESTROY YOU ALL!

HE'S GONE!
AND WE'RE GOING AFTER HIM! WE'LL RIP UP HALF THE OCEAN FLOOR IF WE HAVE TO! BUT WE WON'T RETURN WITHOUT SUE! NOW LET'S MOVE!


MEANWHILE, IN A SMALL NAVY SURPLUS ONE-MAN SUB...
I HAVE DONE IT! I HAVE ASSEMBLED MY LITTLE CAST OF CHARACTERS!
AND NOW, THE STAGE IS SET, THE CURTAIN IS UP! SO, LET THE ACTION BEGIN!


AND THOUGH NOT ONE OF THE ACTORS REALIZES THE PUPPET MASTER IS DIRECTING BEHIND THE SCENES, I SHALL WITNESS THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF MY ARCH-ENEMIES, AT THE HANDS OF MY POWERFUL PAWN-- SUB-MARINER!


AND, BACK IN NEW YORK...
WE KNOW HOW DANGEROUS NAMOR IS! SO, JUST ON THE CHANCE THAT WE DON'T RETURN FROM THIS MISSION, WE'D BETTER LEAVE THE KEY TO OUR SECRET FILES WITH THE POLICE COMMISSIONER!
ARE YOU KIDDIN'?? WHAT CHANCE DOES THAT ANIMATED SARDINE HAVE AGAINST US?!!
REED'S RIGHT, PLAYMATE! WE OWE IT TO THE POLICE!
WELL, WHILE YOU CAMPFIRE BOYS DO YOUR GOOD DEED, I'M GONNA SAY GOODBYE TO ALICIA! I DON'T WANT HER WORRYIN' ABOUT WHERE I AM!
WE'LL MEET AT OUR PRIVATE PIER IN THIRTY MINUTES!
MINUTES LATER, AT A MIDTOWN PARKING LOT...
OH, FOR GOODNESS SAKES!
HOLD ON THERE, FELLA! THIS PARKING LOT IS ONLY FOR AUTOMOBILES! YOU CAN'T PARK THAT THING HERE!
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, MAC? DIDN'T YOU EVER SEE A CAR WITH WINGS BEFORE?
WELL... THERE'S NOTHING IN THE RULES ABOUT FLYING CARS! JUST TO PLAY SAFE, I'LL HAVE TO CHARGE YOU DOUBLE RATES!
THERE'S THE DOUGH, SMILEY! NOW GO SPLIT IT WITH YOUR PARTNER, JESSE JAMES!
THEN, AT ALICIA'S APARTMENT-STUDIO...
OH, BEN, I'M FRIGHTENED! THE SUB-MARINER IS SO POWERFUL, SO UNPREDICTABLE! AND YOU'LL BE FACING HIM WHERE HE'S STRONGEST --IN HIS OWN DOMAIN!
WELL, REED, JOHNNY, AND YOURS TRULY AIN'T EXACTLY BABES IN ARMS!
OH, BUT, BEN, IF-IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO! YOU-YOU MEAN SO MUCH TO ME!
AND I'D BE ALONE-- WITH NO ONE TO LOOK AFTER ME...
I WAS A MEAT-HEAD TO COME HERE! I CAN'T STAND TO SEE A GAL CRY!
OKAY, BABY, YOU GOT IT! I'LL TAKE YOU WITH US! WHATEVER HAPPENS ...WE'LL BE TOGETHER!
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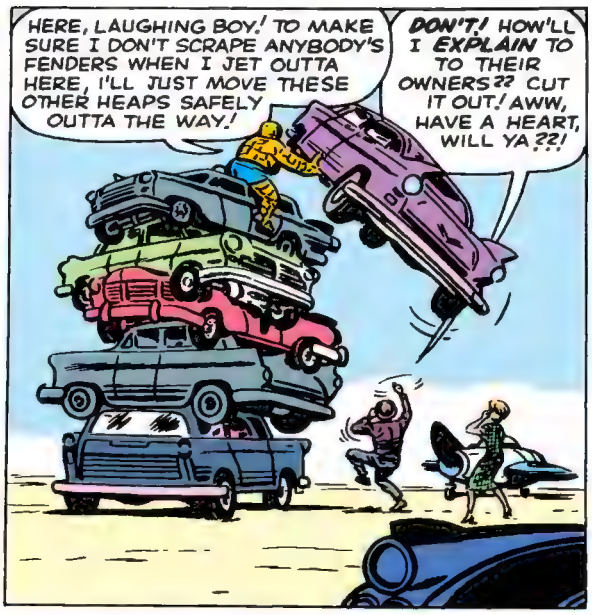
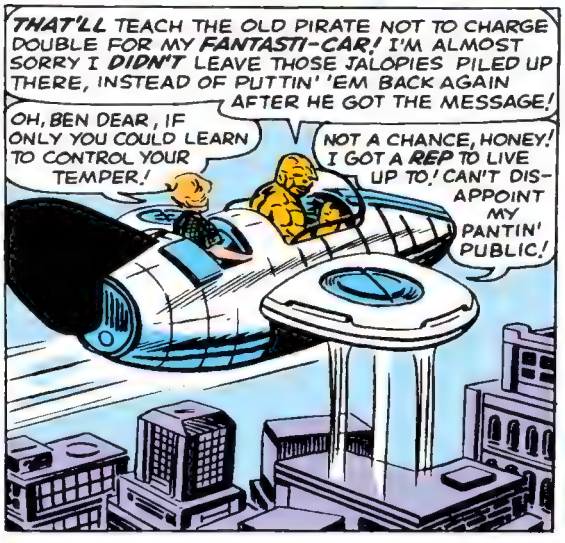
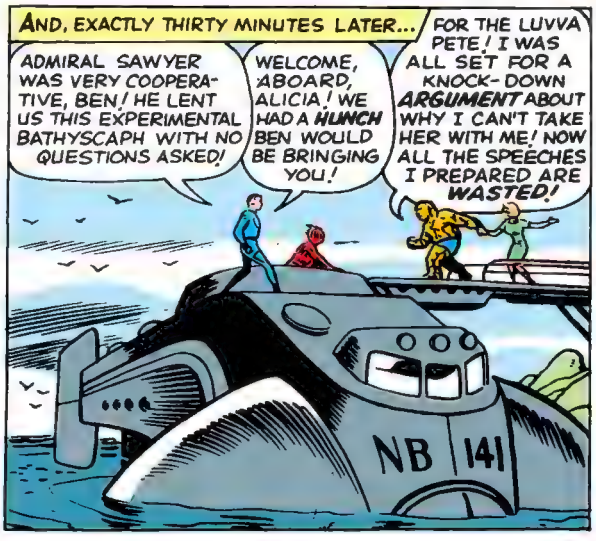
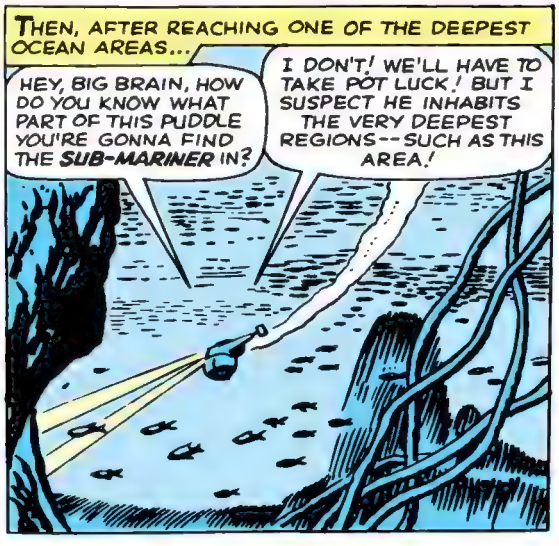
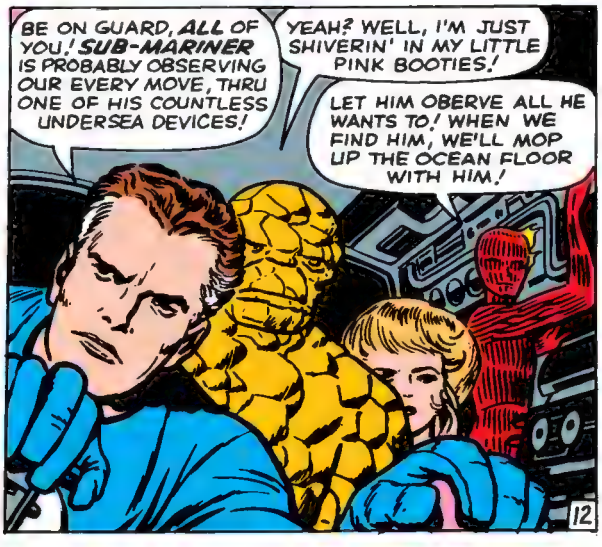
AND SO...
JUST A MINUTE, YOU! THAT'S MY JOB! I'LL BACK THAT CONTRAPTION OUT FOR YOU!
IN A PIG'S EYE YOU WILL! NOBODY HANDLES THAT LITTLE JOB BUT ME! BESIDES, YOU'RE WASTIN' TIME! YOU OUGHTTA BE OUT LOOKIN' FOR OTHER SUCKERS WHO YOU CAN OVER-CHARGE!

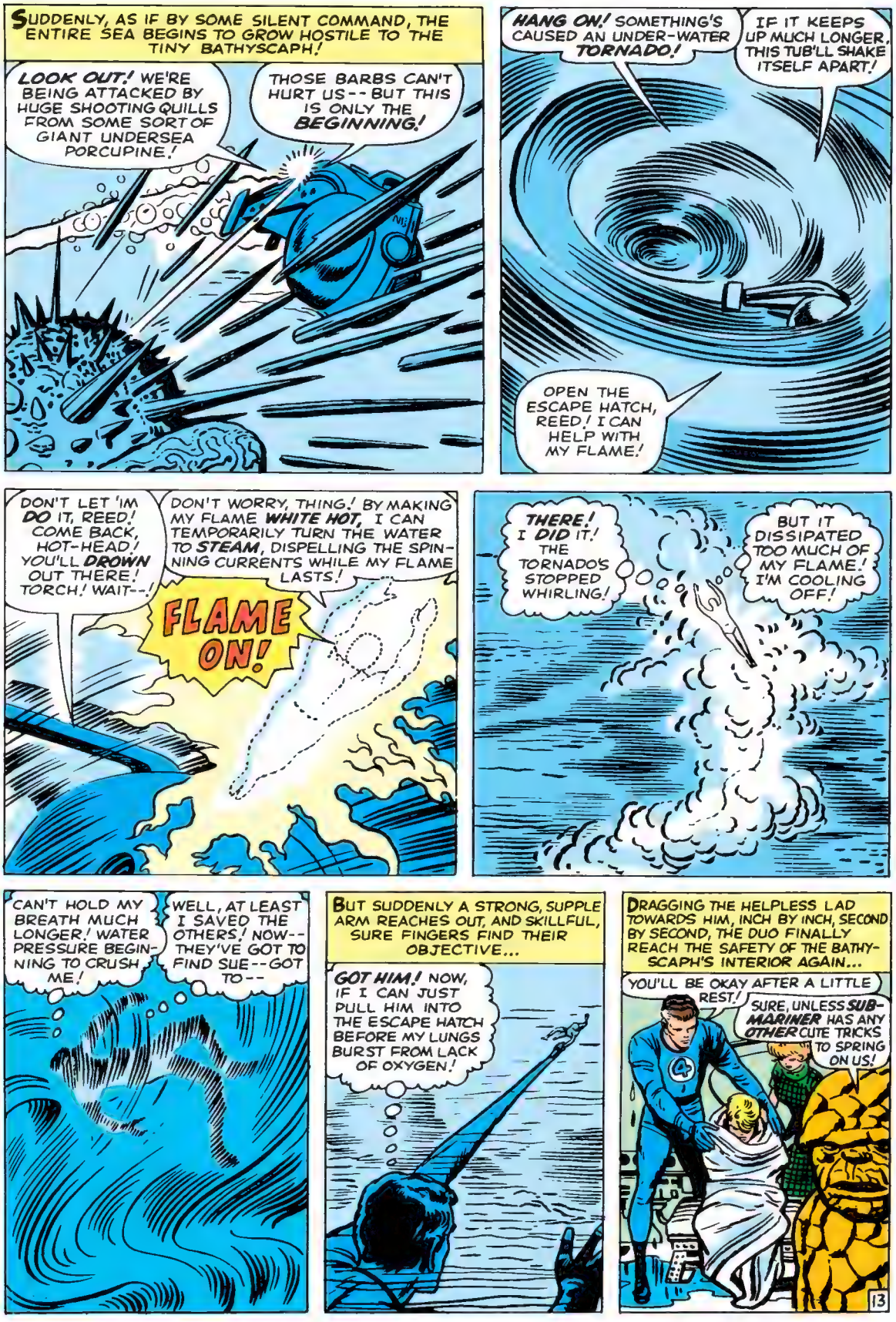

HERE, LAUGHING BOY! TO MAKE SURE I DON'T SCRAPE ANYBODY'S FENDERS WHEN I JET OUTTA HERE, I'LL JUST MOVE THESE OTHER HEAPS SAFELY OUTTA THE WAY!
DON'T! HOW'LL I EXPLAIN TO TO THEIR OWNERS?? CUT IT OUT! AWW, HAVE A HEART, WILL YA??!

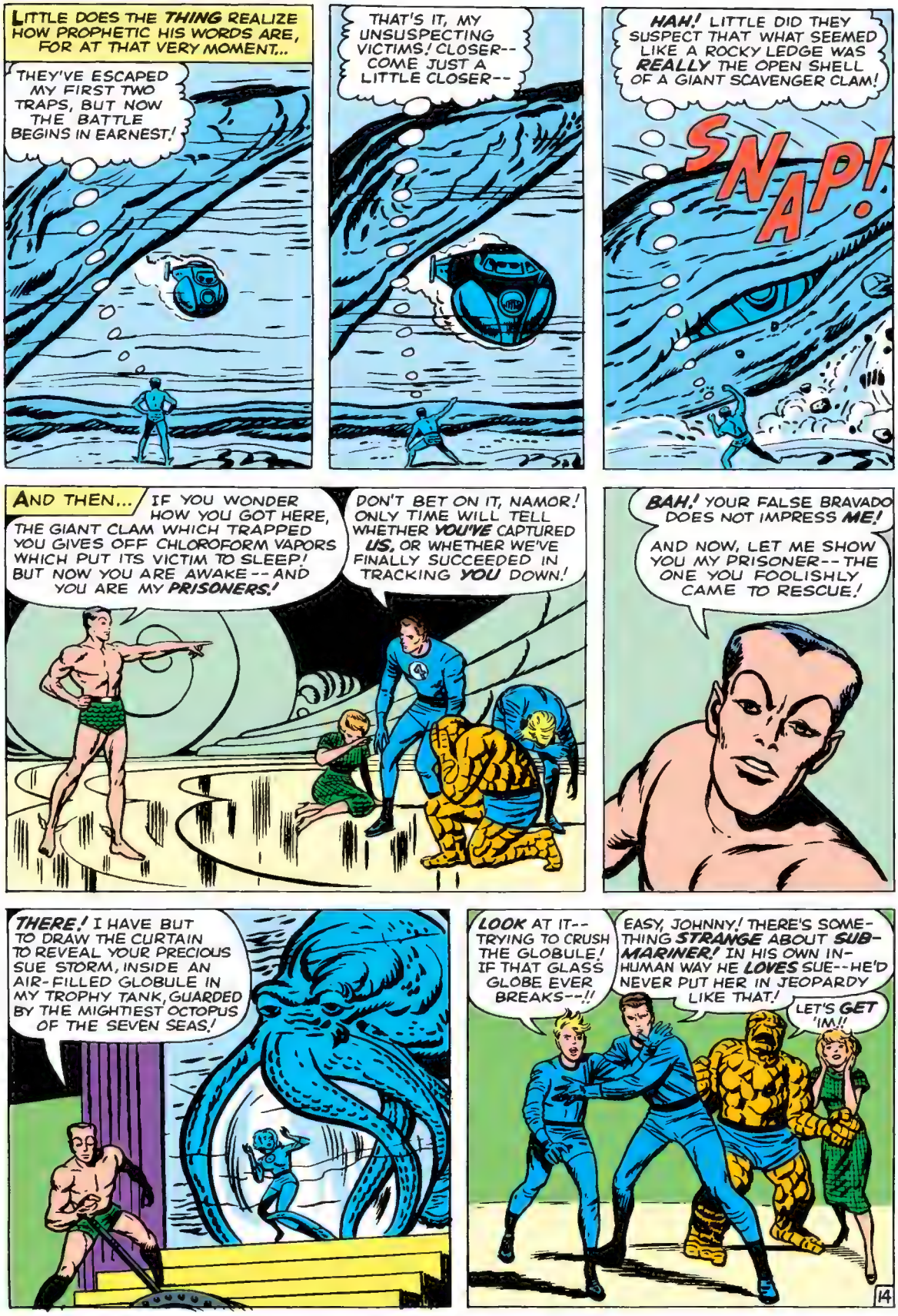

THAT'LL TEACH THE OLD PIRATE NOT TO CHARGE DOUBLE FOR MY FANTASTI-CAR! I'M ALMOST SORRY I DIDN'T LEAVE THOSE JALOPIES PILED UP THERE, INSTEAD OF PUTTIN' 'EM BACK AGAIN AFTER HE GOT THE MESSAGE!
OH, BEN DEAR, IF ONLY YOU COULD LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR TEMPER!
NOT A CHANCE, HONEY! I GOT A REP TO LIVE UP TO! CAN'T DIS-APPOINT MY PANTIN' PUBLIC!

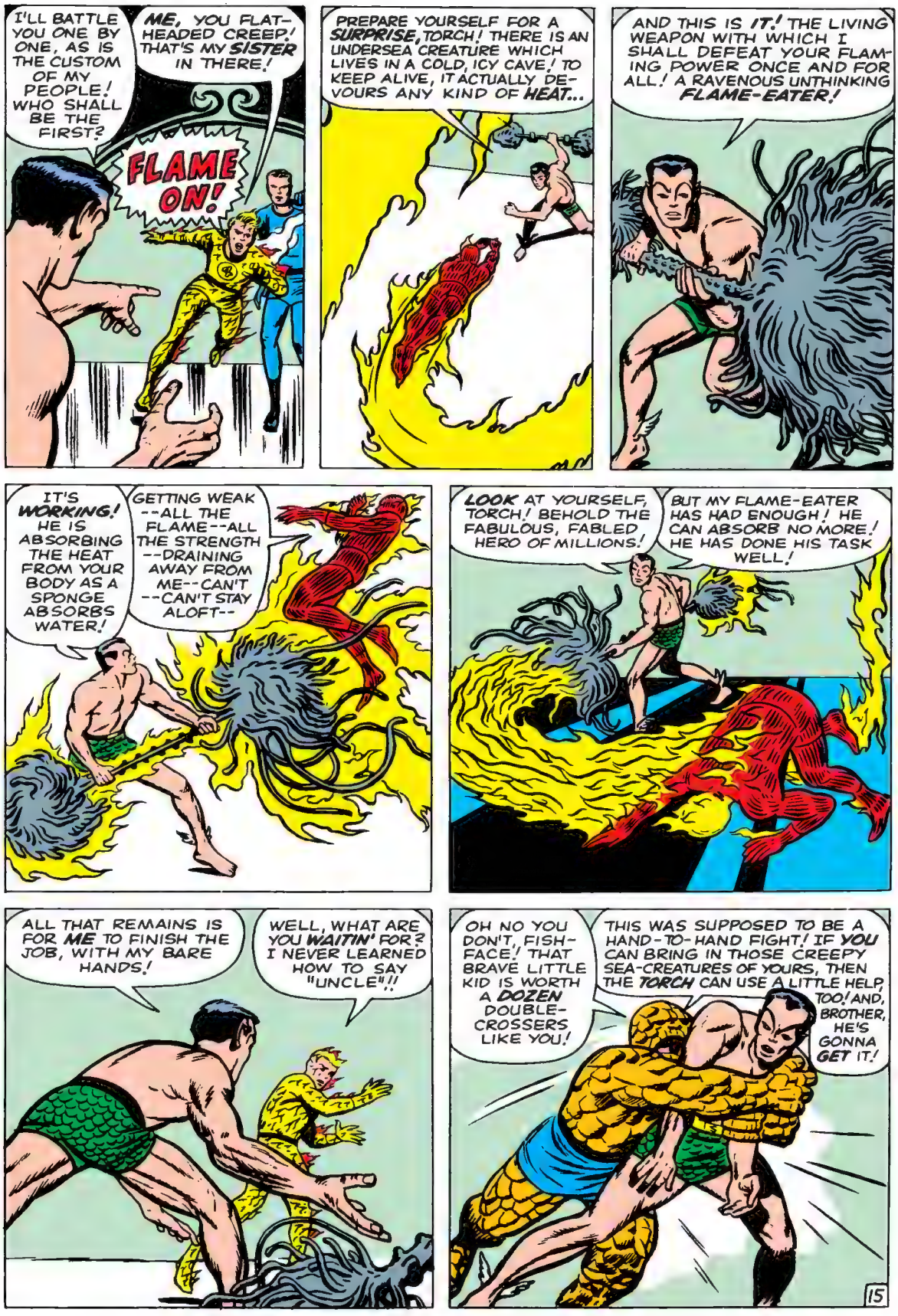

AND, EXACTLY THIRTY MINUTES LATER...
ADMIRAL SAWYER WAS VERY COOPERA-TIVE, BEN! HE LENT US THIS EXPERIMENTAL BATHYSCAPH WITH NO QUESTIONS ASKED!
WELCOME, ABOARD, ALICIA! WE HAD A HUNCH BEN WOULD BE BRINGING YOU!
FOR THE LUVVA PETE! I WAS ALL SET FOR A KNOCK-DOWN ARGUMENT ABOUT WHY I CAN'T TAKE HER WITH ME! NOW ALL THE SPEECHES I PREPARED ARE WASTED!
NB 141

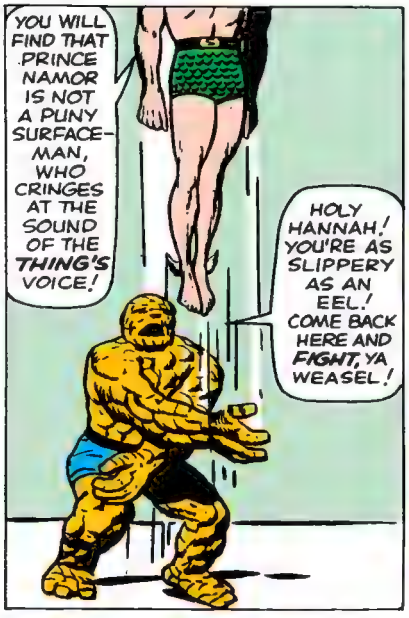

THEN, AFTER REACHING ONE OF THE DEEPEST OCEAN AREAS...
HEY, BIG BRAIN, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT PART OF THIS PUDDLE YOU'RE GONNA FIND THE SUB-MARINER IN?
I DON'T! WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE POT LUCK! BUT I SUSPECT HE INHABITS THE VERY DEEPEST REGIONS--SUCH AS THIS AREA!


BE ON GUARD, ALL OF YOU! SUB-MARINER IS PROBABLY OBSERVING OUR EVERY MOVE, THRU ONE OF HIS COUNTLESS UNDERSEA DEVICES!
YEAH? WELL, I'M JUST SHIVERIN' IN MY LITTLE PINK BOOTIES!
LET HIM OBERVE ALL HE WANTS TO! WHEN WE FIND HIM, WE'LL MOP UP THE OCEAN FLOOR WITH HIM!

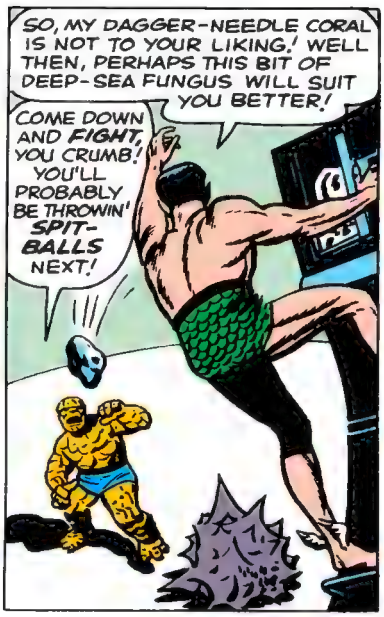

SUDDENLY, AS IF BY SOME SILENT COMMAND, THE ENTIRE SEA BEGINS TO GROW HOSTILE TO THE TINY BATHYSCAPH!
LOOK OUT! WE'RE BEING ATTACKED BY HUGE SHOOTING QUILLS FROM SOME SORT OF GIANT UNDERSEA PORCUPINE!
THOSE BARBS CAN'T HURT US--BUT THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!
HANG ON! SOMETHING'S CAUSED AN UNDER-WATER TORNADO!
IF IT KEEPS UP MUCH LONGER, THIS TUB'LL SHAKE ITSELF APART!
OPEN THE ESCAPE HATCH, REED! I CAN HELP WITH MY FLAME!
DON'T LET 'IM DO IT, REED! COME BACK, HOT-HEAD! YOU'LL DROWN OUT THERE! TORCH! WAIT--!
DON'T WORRY, THING! BY MAKING MY FLAME WHITE HOT, I CAN TEMPORARILY TURN THE WATER TO STEAM, DISPELLING THE SPINNING CURRENTS WHILE MY FLAME LASTS!
FLAME ON!
THERE! I DID IT! THE TORNADO'S STOPPED WHIRLING!
BUT IT DISSIPATED TOO MUCH OF MY FLAME! I'M COOLING OFF!
CAN'T HOLD MY BREATH MUCH LONGER! WATER PRESSURE BEGINNING TO CRUSH ME!
WELL, AT LEAST I SAVED THE OTHERS! NOW--THEY'VE GOT TO FIND SUE--GOT TO--
BUT SUDDENLY A STRONG, SUPPLE ARM REACHES OUT, AND SKILLFUL, SURE FINGERS FIND THEIR OBJECTIVE...
GOT HIM! NOW, IF I CAN JUST PULL HIM INTO THE ESCAPE HATCH BEFORE MY LUNGS BURST FROM LACK OF OXYGEN!
DRAGGING THE HELPLESS LAD TOWARDS HIM, INCH BY INCH, SECOND BY SECOND, THE DUO FINALLY REACH THE SAFETY OF THE BATHYSCAPH'S INTERIOR AGAIN...
YOU'LL BE OKAY AFTER A LITTLE REST!
SURE, UNLESS SUB-MARINER HAS ANY OTHER CUTE TRICKS TO SPRING ON US!
13

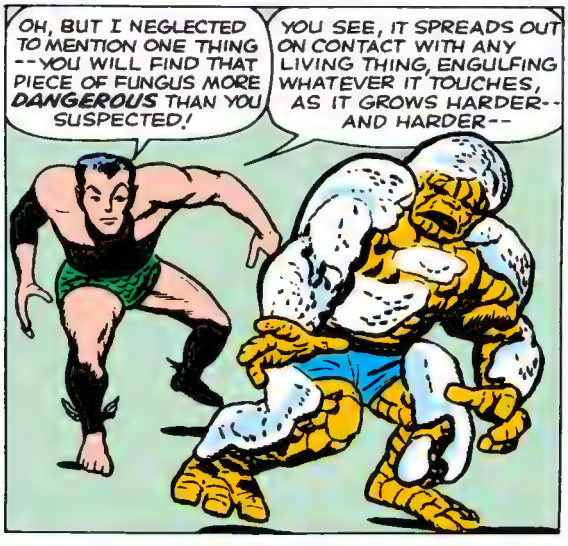

LITTLE DOES THE THING REALIZE HOW PROPHETIC HIS WORDS ARE, FOR AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
THEY'VE ESCAPED MY FIRST TWO TRAPS, BUT NOW THE BATTLE BEGINS IN EARNEST!
THAT'S IT, MY UNSUSPECTING VICTIMS! CLOSER-- COME JUST A LITTLE CLOSER--
HAH! LITTLE DID THEY SUSPECT THAT WHAT SEEMED LIKE A ROCKY LEDGE WAS REALLY THE OPEN SHELL OF A GIANT SCAVENGER CLAM!
SNAP!
AND THEN... IF YOU WONDER HOW YOU GOT HERE, THE GIANT CLAM WHICH TRAPPED YOU GIVES OFF CHLOROFORM VAPORS WHICH PUT ITS VICTIM TO SLEEP! BUT NOW YOU ARE AWAKE -- AND YOU ARE MY PRISONERS!
DON'T BET ON IT, NAMOR! ONLY TIME WILL TELL WHETHER YOU'VE CAPTURED US, OR WHETHER WE'VE FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN TRACKING YOU DOWN!
BAH! YOUR FALSE BRAVADO DOES NOT IMPRESS ME!
AND NOW, LET ME SHOW YOU MY PRISONER -- THE ONE YOU FOOLISHLY CAME TO RESCUE!
THERE! I HAVE BUT TO DRAW THE CURTAIN TO REVEAL YOUR PRECIOUS SUE STORM, INSIDE AN AIR-FILLED GLOBULE IN MY TROPHY TANK, GUARDED BY THE MIGHTIEST OCTOPUS OF THE SEVEN SEAS!
LOOK AT IT-- TRYING TO CRUSH THE GLOBULE! IF THAT GLASS GLOBE EVER BREAKS--!!
EASY, JOHNNY! THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT SUB-MARINER! IN HIS OWN INHUMAN WAY HE LOVES SUE--HE'D NEVER PUT HER IN JEOPARDY LIKE THAT!
LET'S GET 'IM!!
14


I'LL BATTLE YOU ONE BY ONE, AS IS THE CUSTOM OF MY PEOPLE! WHO SHALL BE THE FIRST?
ME, YOU FLAT-HEADED CREEP! THAT'S MY SISTER IN THERE!
FLAME ON!
PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A SURPRISE, TORCH! THERE IS AN UNDERSEA CREATURE WHICH LIVES IN A COLD, ICY CAVE! TO KEEP ALIVE, IT ACTUALLY DEVOURS ANY KIND OF HEAT...
AND THIS IS IT! THE LIVING WEAPON WITH WHICH I SHALL DEFEAT YOUR FLAMING POWER ONCE AND FOR ALL! A RAVENOUS UNTHINKING FLAME-EATER!
IT'S WORKING! HE IS ABSORBING THE HEAT FROM YOUR BODY AS A SPONGE ABSORBS WATER!
GETTING WEAK --ALL THE FLAME--ALL THE STRENGTH --DRAINING AWAY FROM ME--CAN'T --CAN'T STAY ALOFT--
LOOK AT YOURSELF, TORCH! BEHOLD THE FABULOUS, FABLED HERO OF MILLIONS!
BUT MY FLAME-EATER HAS HAD ENOUGH! HE CAN ABSORB NO MORE! HE HAS DONE HIS TASK WELL!
ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR ME TO FINISH THE JOB, WITH MY BARE HANDS!
WELL, WHAT ARE YOU WAITIN' FOR? I NEVER LEARNED HOW TO SAY "UNCLE"!!
OH NO YOU DON'T, FISH-FACE! THAT BRAVE LITTLE KID IS WORTH A DOZEN DOUBLE-CROSSERS LIKE YOU!
THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A HAND-TO-HAND FIGHT! IF YOU CAN BRING IN THOSE CREEPY SEA-CREATURES OF YOURS, THEN THE TORCH CAN USE A LITTLE HELP, TOO! AND, BROTHER, HE'S GONNA GET IT!


YOU WILL FIND THAT PRINCE NAMOR IS NOT A PUNY SURFACE-MAN, WHO CRINGES AT THE SOUND OF THE THING'S VOICE!
HOLY HANNAH! YOU'RE AS SLIPPERY AS AN EEL! COME BACK HERE AND FIGHT, YA WEASEL!

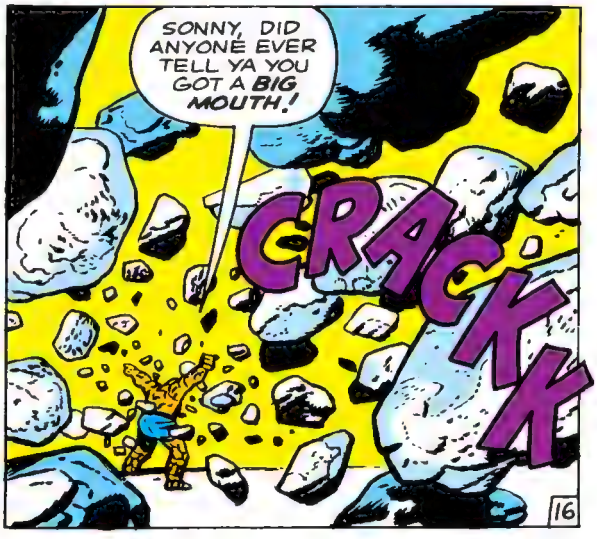
I'LL FIGHT YOU, NEVER FEAR! BUT, YOU UGLY BLUNDERING OAF, WE SHALL FIGHT MY WAY--ON MY TERMS! HERE, LET ME TOSS YOU A LITTLE PRESENT--
OWW! IT--IT'S RAZOR SHARP!!


SO, MY DAGGER-NEEDLE CORAL IS NOT TO YOUR LIKING! WELL THEN, PERHAPS THIS BIT OF DEEP-SEA FUNGUS WILL SUIT YOU BETTER!
COME DOWN AND FIGHT, YOU CRUMB! YOU'LL PROBABLY BE THROWIN' SPIT-BALLS NEXT!

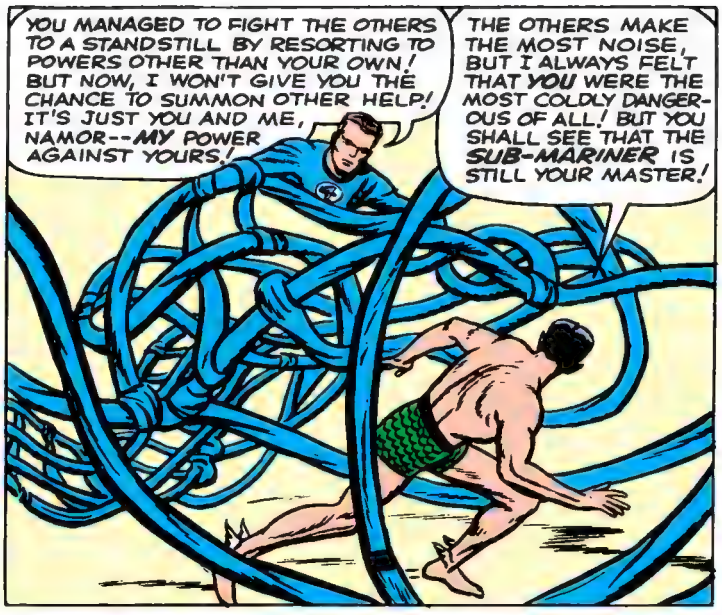

OH, BUT I NEGLECTED TO MENTION ONE THING --YOU WILL FIND THAT PIECE OF FUNGUS MORE DANGEROUS THAN YOU SUSPECTED!
YOU SEE, IT SPREADS OUT ON CONTACT WITH ANY LIVING THING, ENGULFING WHATEVER IT TOUCHES, AS IT GROWS HARDER--AND HARDER--

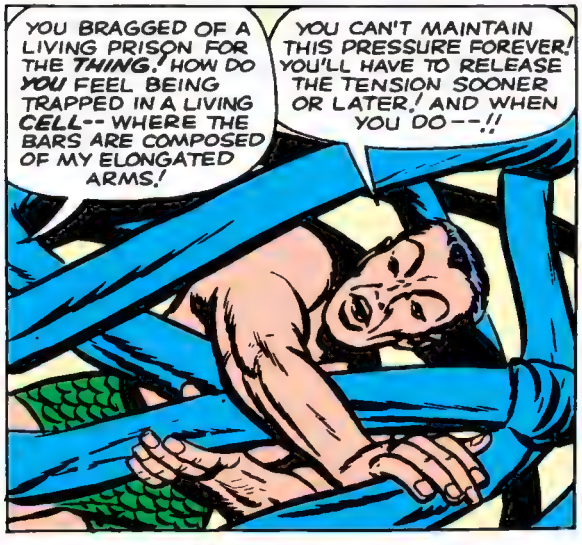
THERE, YOU LUMBERING CLOD! I HAVE BEATEN YOU! I HAVE TRAPPED YOU IN A LIVING PRISON--A PRISON FROM WHICH THERE IS NO ESCAPE!

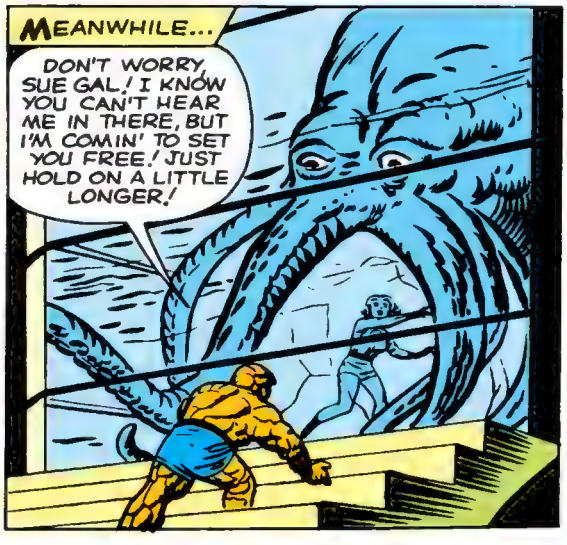
THAT'S IT, THING! STRUGGLE HELPLESSLY! WRITHE, AND BEND, AND FLEX YOUR NOW-USELESS MUSCLES! IN ANOTHER SECOND EVEN THAT ACTIVITY WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU!

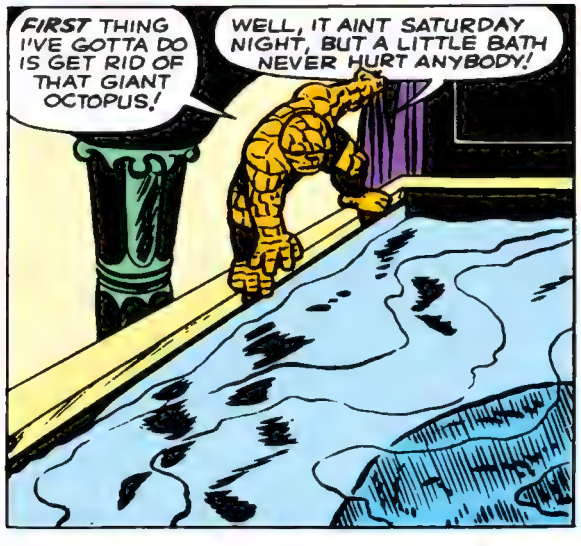

SONNY, DID ANYONE EVER TELL YA YOU GOT A BIG MOUTH!
CRACK

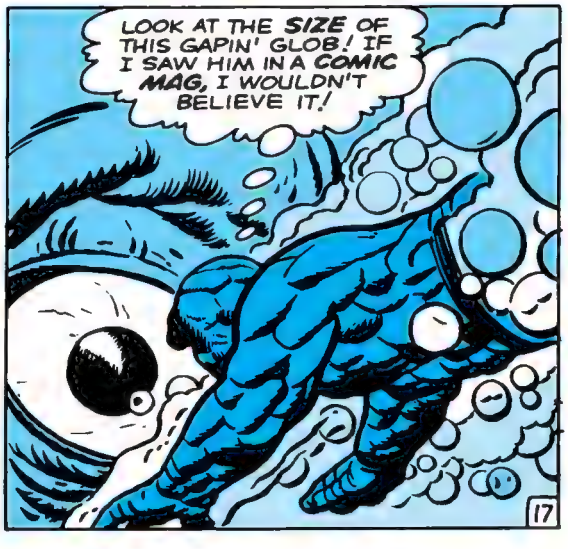
GOOD WORK, PARTNER! WE'RE BEGINNING TO SHAKE HIS CONFIDENCE! NOW I'LL FINISH HIM OFF WHILE YOU LOOK AFTER SUE!
I HEAR YOU TALKIN', BIG DADDY! YOU WAIT THERE, ALICIA BABY, AND I'LL BRING YOU BACK SOME OCTOPUS PIE!

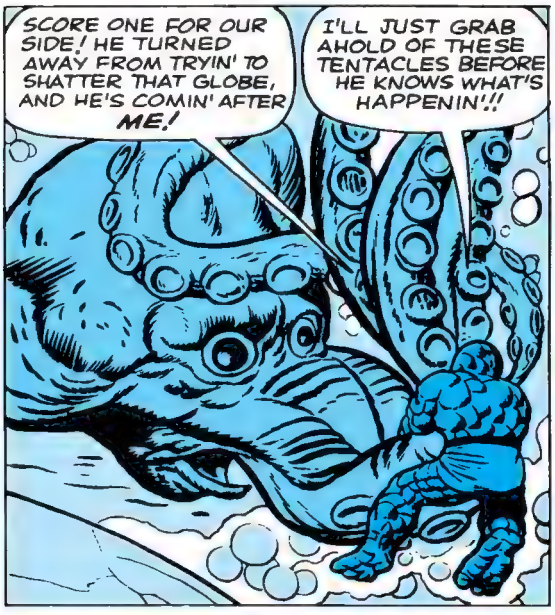

YOU MANAGED TO FIGHT THE OTHERS TO A STANDSTILL BY RESORTING TO POWERS OTHER THAN YOUR OWN! BUT NOW, I WON'T GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO SUMMON OTHER HELP! IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, NAMOR--MY POWER AGAINST YOURS!
THE OTHERS MAKE THE MOST NOISE, BUT I ALWAYS FELT THAT YOU WERE THE MOST COLDLY DANGEROUS OF ALL! BUT YOU SHALL SEE THAT THE SUB-MARINER IS STILL YOUR MASTER!

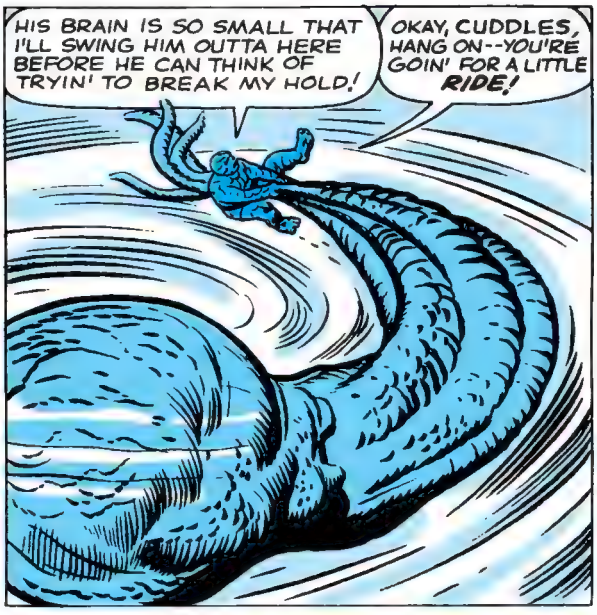

YOU BRAGGED OF A LIVING PRISON FOR THE THING! HOW DO YOU FEEL BEING TRAPPED IN A LIVING CELL-- WHERE THE BARS ARE COMPOSED OF MY ELONGATED ARMS!
YOU CAN'T MAINTAIN THIS PRESSURE FOREVER! YOU'LL HAVE TO RELEASE THE TENSION SOONER OR LATER! AND WHEN YOU DO--!!


MEANWHILE...
DON'T WORRY, SUE GAL! I KNOW YOU CAN'T HEAR ME IN THERE, BUT I'M COMIN' TO SET YOU FREE! JUST HOLD ON A LITTLE LONGER!


FIRST THING I'VE GOTTA DO IS GET RID OF THAT GIANT OCTOPUS!
WELL, IT AINT SATURDAY NIGHT, BUT A LITTLE BATH NEVER HURT ANYBODY!

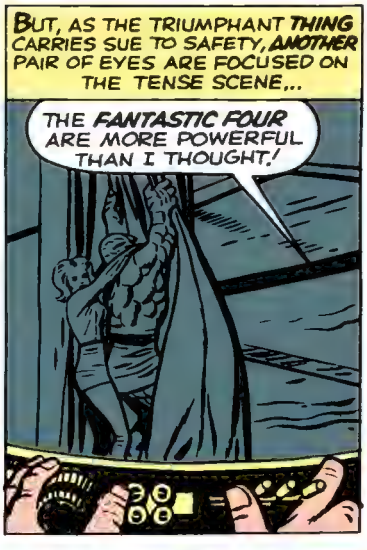

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THIS GAPIN' GLOB! IF I SAW HIM IN A COMIC MAG, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT!


SCORE ONE FOR OUR SIDE! HE TURNED AWAY FROM TRYIN' TO SHATTER THAT GLOBE, AND HE'S COMIN' AFTER ME!
I'LL JUST GRAB AHOLD OF THESE TENTACLES BEFORE HE KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENIN'!!


HIS BRAIN IS SO SMALL THAT I'LL SWING HIM OUTTA HERE BEFORE HE CAN THINK OF TRYIN' TO BREAK MY HOLD!
OKAY, CUDDLES, HANG ON--YOU'RE GOIN' FOR A LITTLE RIDE!

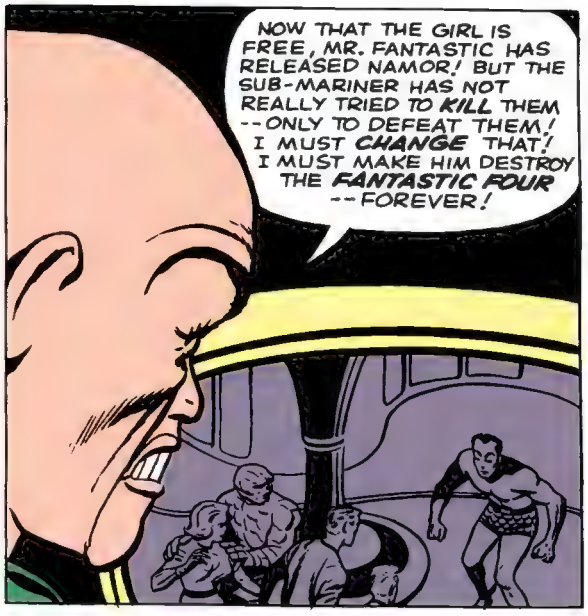
THEN, AS THE MONSTROUS, UNTHINKING CREATURE GOES SKIMMING TOWARDS THE TOP OF NAMOR'S ENORMOUS DOMED HEADQUARTERS, THE THING RUSHES TO SUE STORM...
HOLD YOUR BREATH, SUE! I'LL HAVE YOU OUTTA HERE IN TWO SECONDS!

BRAVE KID! NOT A WHIMPER OUT OF HER! FIRST TIME I EVER SAW A FEMALE WHO COULD KEEP HER MOUTH SHUT SO LONG!


BUT, AS THE TRIUMPHANT THING CARRIES SUE TO SAFETY, ANOTHER PAIR OF EYES ARE FOCUSED ON THE TENSE SCENE...
THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN I THOUGHT!

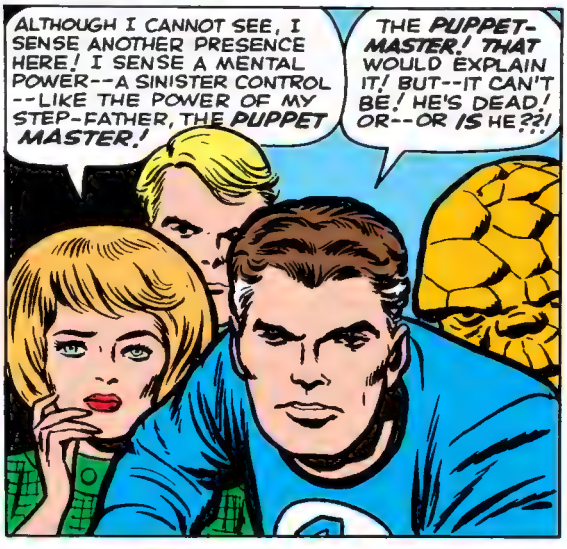
THIS WAS NOT THE WAY I PLANNED IT!
EVEN IN HIS OWN UNDERSEA LAIR, THE ACCURSED FOURSOME MAY SUCCEED IN DEFEATING THE SUB-MARINER!

NO LONGER CAN I LET THINGS TAKE THEIR NATURAL COURSE! NOW I MYSELF MUST TAKE A HAND! IT IS TIME FOR ME TO DESTROY THEM ALL!


NOW THAT THE GIRL IS FREE, MR. FANTASTIC HAS RELEASED NAMOR! BUT THE SUB-MARINER HAS NOT REALLY TRIED TO KILL THEM --ONLY TO DEFEAT THEM! I MUST CHANGE THAT! I MUST MAKE HIM DESTROY THE FANTASTIC FOUR --FOREVER!

SO LONG AS YOU ARE MY PUPPET, YOU MUST DO MY BIDDING! YOU MUST SLAY THE REAL FANTASTIC FOUR, JUST AS I HAVE TOPPLED THEIR PUPPET IMAGES!

NAMOR, LET'S STOP THIS USELESS STRUGGLE! WHY MUST WE ALWAYS BATTLE EACH OTHER? WHAT HAS MADE YOU TURN AGAINST US--TURN AGAINST SUE?
STAY BACK! THE TIME FOR WORDS IS LONG PAST! I MUST PUT AN END TO YOU NOW--TO ALL OF YOU! I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE!


ALTHOUGH I CANNOT SEE, I SENSE ANOTHER PRESENCE HERE! I SENSE A MENTAL POWER--A SINISTER CONTROL --LIKE THE POWER OF MY STEP-FATHER, THE PUPPET MASTER!
THE PUPPET-MASTER! THAT WOULD EXPLAIN IT! BUT--IT CAN'T BE! HE'S DEAD! OR--OR IS HE??!

THIS PLANT IS MY ULTIMATE WEAPON! IT RELEASES A GAS WHICH NO LIVING CREATURE CAN WITHSTAND! AND THESE FUMES SHALL NOW DESTROY YOU ALL!

RELEASE THE FUMES! I COMMAND YOU! YOU MUST OBEY ME!
I MUST OBEY--I MUST --I MUST KILL THEM ALL--

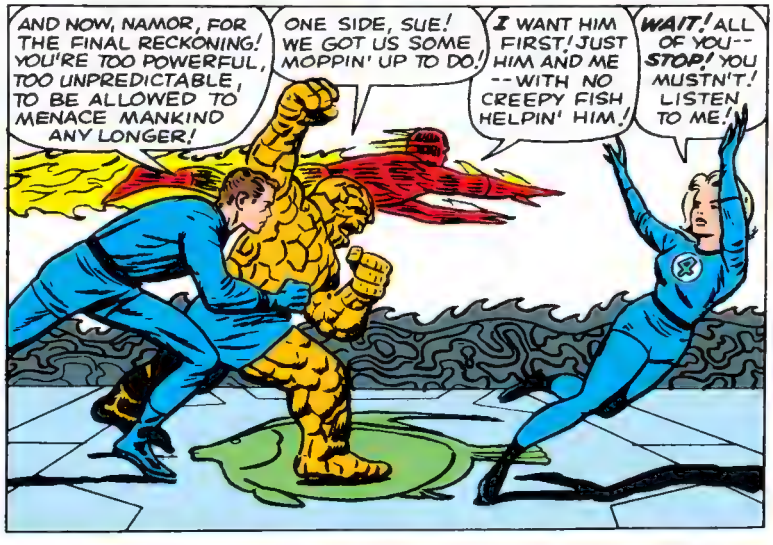
THEY ARE MY ENEMIES! IT IS THEIR LIVES, OR MINE! AND YET --SUE IS AMONG THEM! BUT--I HAVE NO CHOICE--
YET--WHY MUST THEY PERISH?? WHY CAN I NOT STAY MY HAND--??

STAY BEHIND ME--ALL OF YOU! WHATEVER'S COMIN', I'LL TAKE IT FIRST! I AIN'T SO EASY TO KILL, AND IT'LL GIVE YOU TIME TO ERASE THAT SLIMY WETHEAD ONCE AND FOR ALL!
THAT'S IT, THING! KEEP HIS ATTENTION ON YOU WHILE I TAKE A FEW PREVENTATIVE MEASURES!

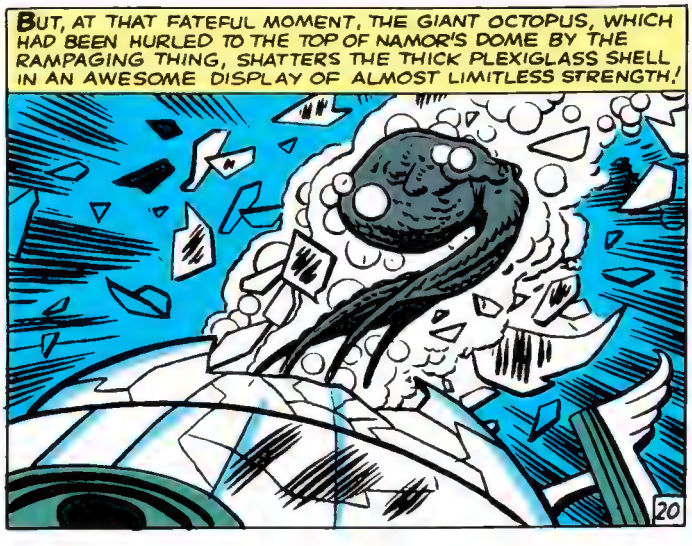
NO! I CAN'T! I WON'T! I CAN'T MURDER THE --WHA--? WHAT HAPPENED?!!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO ACTIVATE THE FUMES,!! HOW WERE THEY RELEASED?? WHAT IS CONTROLLING ME??

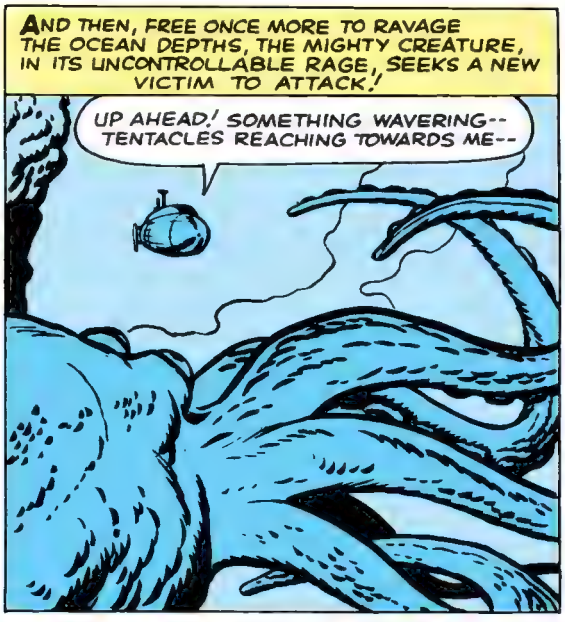
BUT--YOU'RE STILL--STILL STANDING! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NOTHING CAN SURVIVE THOSE LETHAL FUMES! NOT EVEN YOU!!

DID YOU THINK I WOULD BE UNPREPARED FOR SUCH A DEADLY THREAT?? I PLACED THESE FLEX-O-GEN PACKETS ON ALL OUR FACES BEFORE YOU STRUCK!


AND NOW, NAMOR, FOR THE FINAL RECKONING! YOU'RE TOO POWERFUL, TOO UNPREDICTABLE, TO BE ALLOWED TO MENACE MANKIND ANY LONGER!
ONE SIDE, SUE! WE GOT US SOME MOPPIN' UP TO DO!
I WANT HIM FIRST! JUST HIM AND ME --WITH NO CREEPY FISH HELPIN' HIM!
WAIT! ALL OF YOU-- STOP! YOU MUSTN'T! LISTEN TO ME!

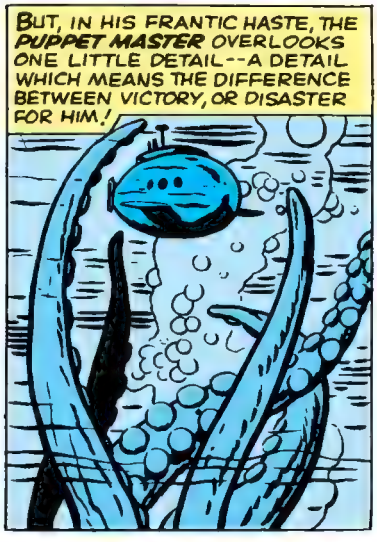
HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING! HE ISN'T TO BLAME FOR WHAT'S HAPPENED! ALICIA WAS RIGHT! NAMOR IS UNDER SOME SORT OF A SPELL--UNDER SOME EVIL INFLUENCE! I KNOW IT!
STAND ASIDE! THEY DO NOT FRIGHTEN THE SUB-MARINER!


BUT, AT THAT FATEFUL MOMENT, THE GIANT OCTOPUS, WHICH HAD BEEN HURLED TO THE TOP OF NAMOR'S DOME BY THE RAMPAGING THING, SHATTERS THE THICK PLEXIGLASS SHELL IN AN AWESOME DISPLAY OF ALMOST LIMITLESS STRENGTH!

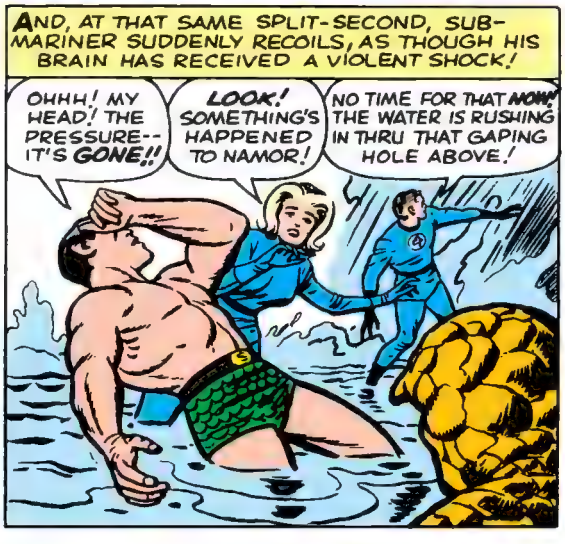

AND THEN, FREE ONCE MORE TO RAVAGE THE OCEAN DEPTHS, THE MIGHTY CREATURE, IN ITS UNCONTROLLABLE RAGE, SEEKS A NEW VICTIM TO ATTACK!
UP AHEAD! SOMETHING WAVERING-- TENTACLES REACHING TOWARDS ME--

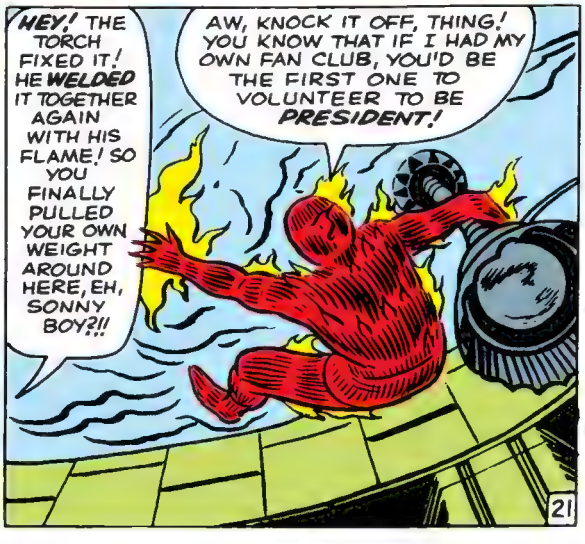
OH NO--NO! IT'S THE BEAST--THE GIANT OCTOPUS! IT SEES ME! IT'S COMING TOWARDS THE SUB!
TOO LATE TO CHANGE COURSE! ONLY ONE CHANCE! I'VE GOT TO CONTROL IT! I'VE ONLY SECONDS IN WHICH TO MAKE A PUPPET OF THE DEADLY BRUTE!!

HE'S COMING CLOSER! BUT HE WON'T GET ME! I'LL HAVE HIM UNDER MY CONTROL BEFORE HE CAN TOUCH THE SHIP! NO ONE CAN DEFEAT THE PUPPET MASTER, AS LONG AS I HAVE MY RADIO-ACTIVE CLAY!

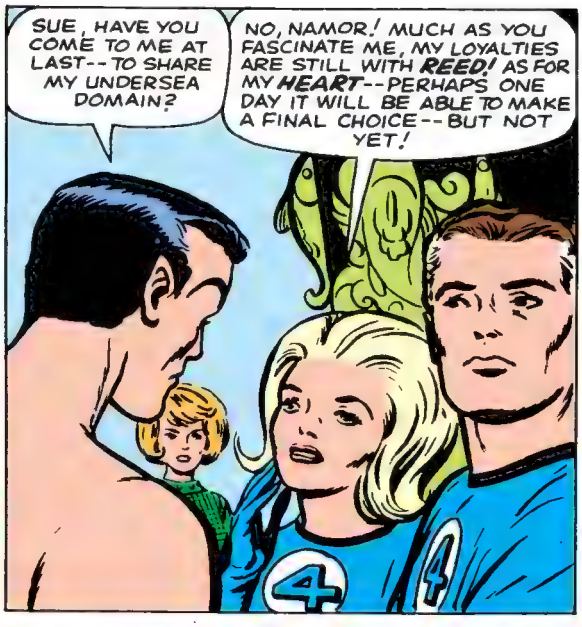

BUT, IN HIS FRANTIC HASTE, THE PUPPET MASTER OVERLOOKS ONE LITTLE DETAIL--A DETAIL WHICH MEANS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VICTORY, OR DISASTER FOR HIM!

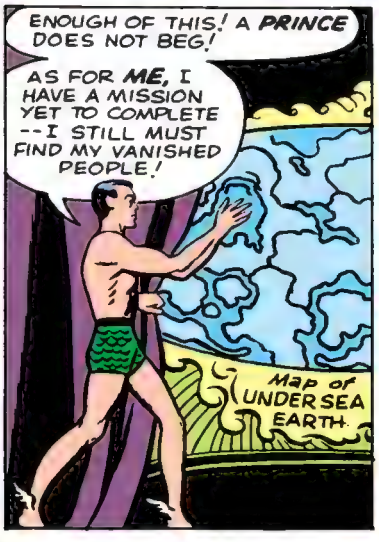
FOR THE SINISTER SCULPTOR FORGOT THAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL THE MIND OF A CREATURE WHICH IS ALMOST MINDLESS! AND SO...
NO! STAY BACK! BACK! I COMMAND YOU! IT'S NO USE! HE DOESN'T OBEY! HE'S TRYING TO CRUSH THE SUB--


AND, AT THAT SAME SPLIT-SECOND, SUB-MARINER SUDDENLY RECOILS, AS THOUGH HIS BRAIN HAS RECEIVED A VIOLENT SHOCK!
OHHH! MY HEAD! THE PRESSURE-- IT'S GONE!!
LOOK! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO NAMOR!
NO TIME FOR THAT NOW! THE WATER IS RUSHING IN THRU THAT GAPING HOLE ABOVE!


HEY! THE TORCH FIXED IT! HE WELDED IT TOGETHER AGAIN WITH HIS FLAME! SO YOU FINALLY PULLED YOUR OWN WEIGHT AROUND HERE, EH, SONNY BOY?!!
AW, KNOCK IT OFF, THING! YOU KNOW THAT IF I HAD MY OWN FAN CLUB, YOU'D BE THE FIRST ONE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE PRESIDENT!

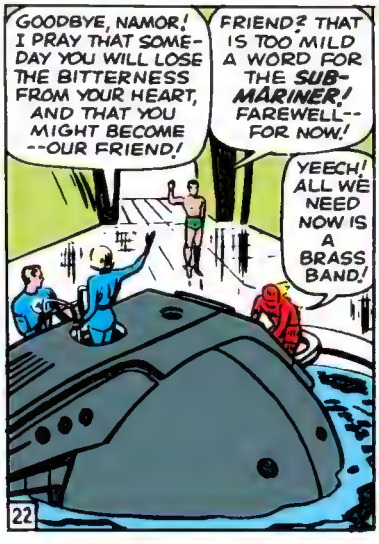
WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING HERE? HOW DARE YOU INVADE THE SANCTUM OF PRINCE NAMOR, UNINVITED?! EXPLAIN YOURSELVES!
I'LL BE BLANKETTY-BLANKED! HE'S EITHER THE WORLD'S BEST ACTOR, OR ELSE HE REALLY WAS UNDER SOME KINDA SPELL!!

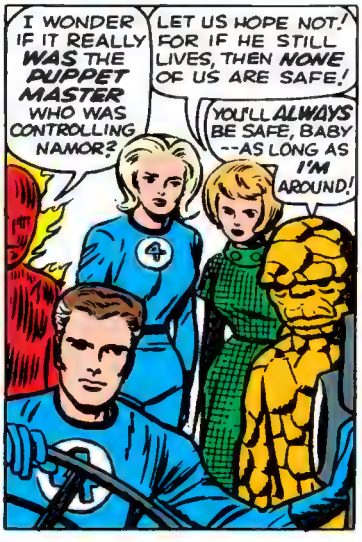

SUE, HAVE YOU COME TO ME AT LAST--TO SHARE MY UNDERSEA DOMAIN?
NO, NAMOR! MUCH AS YOU FASCINATE ME, MY LOYALTIES ARE STILL WITH REED! AS FOR MY HEART--PERHAPS ONE DAY IT WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A FINAL CHOICE--BUT NOT YET!

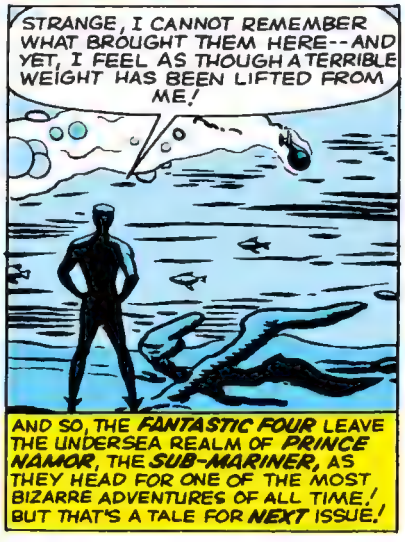

ENOUGH OF THIS! A PRINCE DOES NOT BEG!
AS FOR ME, I HAVE A MISSION YET TO COMPLETE --I STILL MUST FIND MY VANISHED PEOPLE!
Map of UNDERSEA EARTH

SOONER OR LATER, I SHALL LOCATE THEM! I SHALL FIND THE LOST RACE OF SUB-MARINERS! AND THEN WE SHALL SEE TO WHOM THIS PLANET RIGHTLY BELONGS!! DO YOU HEAR ME-- WE SHALL SEE!!!

NOW, RETURN TO THE SURFACE! YOU HAVE NO FURTHER BUSINESS HERE! TAKE THE GIRL, REED RICHARDS--TAKE HER, AND HOLD HER IF YOU CAN! BUT HEED MY WORDS--NEVER SHALL SHE FORGET PRINCE NAMOR!
I'LL GO GET OUR BATHYSCAPH BEFORE THAT CORNBALL STARTS RECITIN' HAMLET!


GOODBYE, NAMOR! I PRAY THAT SOME-DAY YOU WILL LOSE THE BITTERNESS FROM YOUR HEART, AND THAT YOU MIGHT BECOME --OUR FRIEND!
FRIEND? THAT IS TOO MILD A WORD FOR THE SUB-MARINER! FAREWELL--FOR NOW!
YEECH! ALL WE NEED NOW IS A BRASS BAND!


I WONDER IF IT REALLY WAS THE PUPPET MASTER WHO WAS CONTROLLING NAMOR?
LET US HOPE NOT! FOR IF HE STILL LIVES, THEN NONE OF US ARE SAFE!
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE SAFE, BABY --AS LONG AS I'M AROUND!


STRANGE, I CANNOT REMEMBER WHAT BROUGHT THEM HERE--AND YET, I FEEL AS THOUGH A TERRIBLE WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM ME!
AND SO, THE FANTASTIC FOUR LEAVE THE UNDERSEA REALM OF PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, AS THEY HEAD FOR ONE OF THE MOST BIZARRE ADVENTURES OF ALL TIME! BUT THAT'S A TALE FOR NEXT ISSUE!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE Fantastic Four
15 JUNE
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
FEATURING... "THE MAD THINKER AND HIS AWESOME ANDROID!"
LET NONE OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR LEAVE ALIVE!! THE THINKER COMMANDS IT!
HE-HE'S TURNING OUR OWN WEAPONS AGAINST US!! WE HAVEN'T A CHANCE!
NOT ONLY HAS THE MAD THINKER TAKEN OVER THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S HEADQUARTERS, BUT HE'S BEATING THEM AT THEIR OWN GAME!
JUST WAIT! SOONER OR LATER...I'LL GET MY MITTS ON YOU!! JUST WAIT!!
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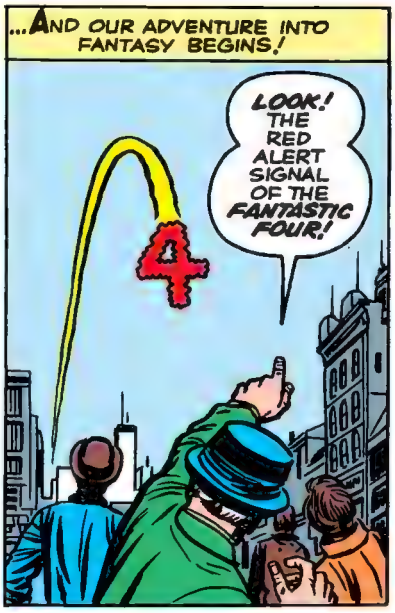
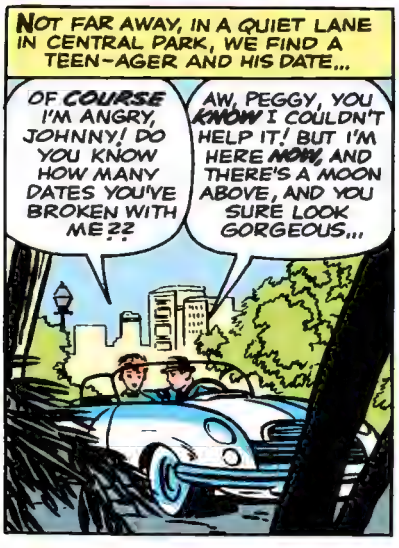
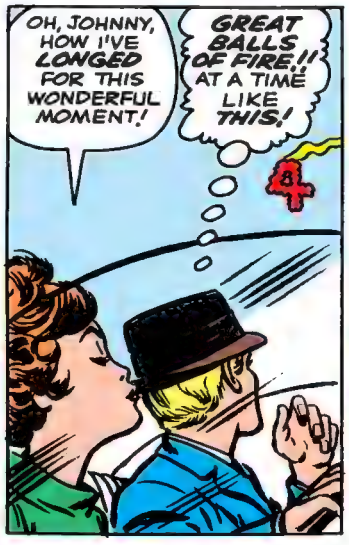
YOU ARE NOW EXPERIENCING ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING MOMENTS IN MAGAZINE READING: THE START OF AN ALL-NEW FANTASTIC FOUR ADVENTURE! THIS IS NEW YORK, HOME OF THE FAMOUS BAXTER BUILDING, WHICH HOUSES THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS!

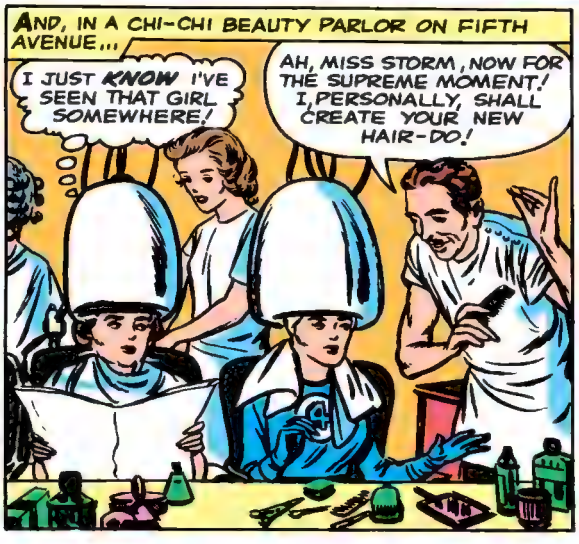
SUDDENLY, A LEAN, POWERFUL HAND FIRES A BRIGHT FLARE INTO THE EVENING SKY...

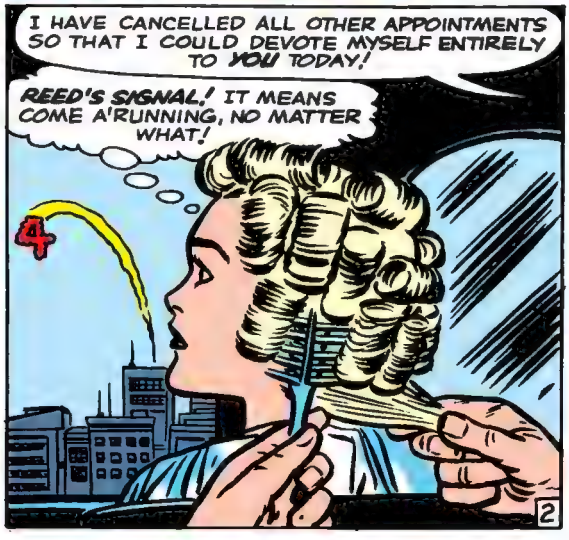

...AND OUR ADVENTURE INTO FANTASY BEGINS!
LOOK! THE RED ALERT SIGNAL OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

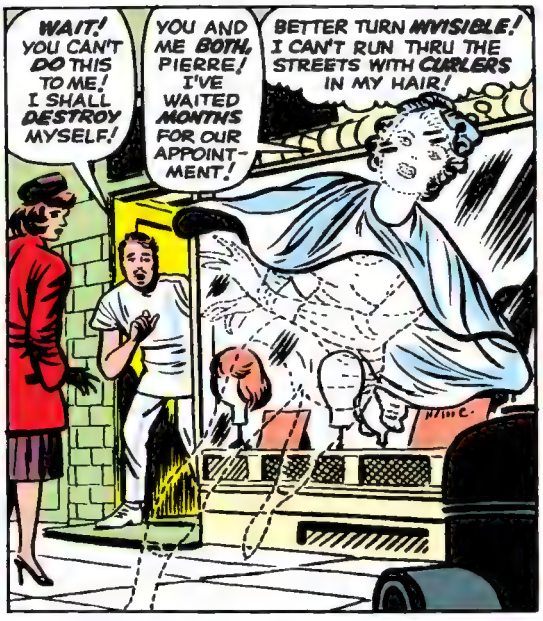

NOT FAR AWAY, IN A QUIET LANE IN CENTRAL PARK, WE FIND A TEEN-AGER AND HIS DATE...
OF COURSE I'M ANGRY, JOHNNY! DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY DATES YOU'VE BROKEN WITH ME??
AW, PEGGY, YOU KNOW I COULDN'T HELP IT! BUT I'M HERE NOW, AND THERE'S A MOON ABOVE, AND YOU SURE LOOK GORGEOUS...

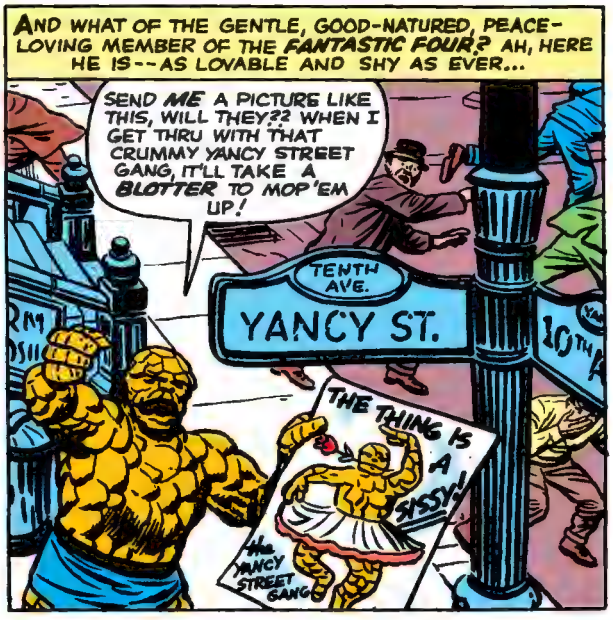

OH, JOHNNY, HOW I'VE LONGED FOR THIS WONDERFUL MOMENT!
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!! AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

SORRY, PEG, I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE YOU FOR A WHILE! HOPE YOU CAN DRIVE!
FLAME ON!
OH! NO! NOT AGAIN!!


AND, IN A CHI-CHI BEAUTY PARLOR ON FIFTH AVENUE...
I JUST KNOW I'VE SEEN THAT GIRL SOMEWHERE!
AH, MISS STORM, NOW FOR THE SUPREME MOMENT! I, PERSONALLY, SHALL CREATE YOUR NEW HAIR-DO!

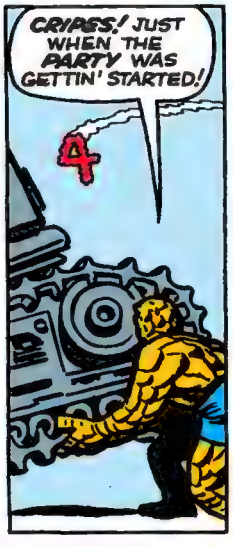

I HAVE CANCELLED ALL OTHER APPOINTMENTS SO THAT I COULD DEVOTE MYSELF ENTIRELY TO YOU TODAY!
REED'S SIGNAL! IT MEANS COME A'RUNNING, NO MATTER WHAT!
2

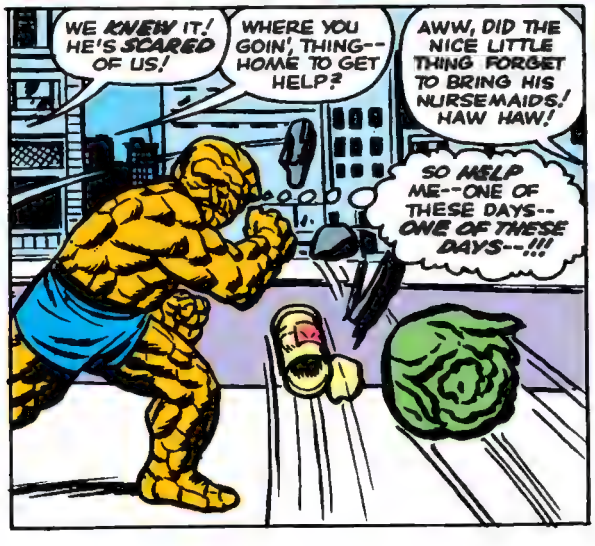

WAIT! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! I SHALL DESTROY MYSELF!
YOU AND ME BOTH, PIERRE! I'VE WAITED MONTHS FOR OUR APPOINT-MENT!
BETTER TURN INVISIBLE! I CAN'T RUN THRU THE STREETS WITH CURLERS IN MY HAIR!

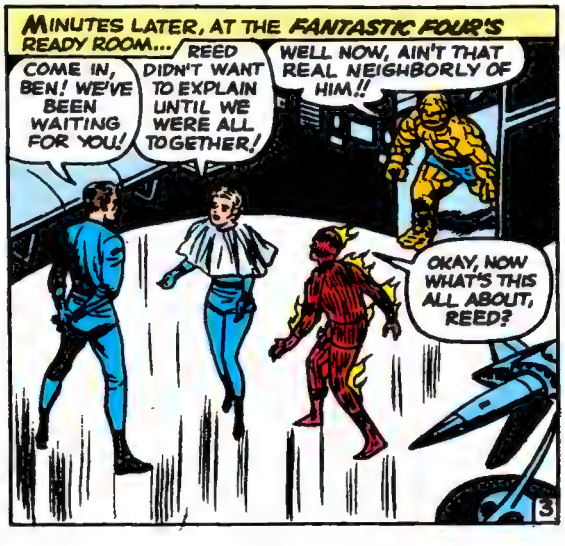

AND WHAT OF THE GENTLE, GOOD-NATURED, PEACE-LOVING MEMBER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR? AH, HERE HE IS--AS LOVABLE AND SHY AS EVER...
SEND ME A PICTURE LIKE THIS, WILL THEY?? WHEN I GET THRU WITH THAT CRUMMY YANCY STREET GANG, IT'LL TAKE A BLOTTER TO MOP 'EM UP!
TENTH AVE.
YANCY ST.
10TH
THE THING IS A SISSY!
the YANCY STREET GANG

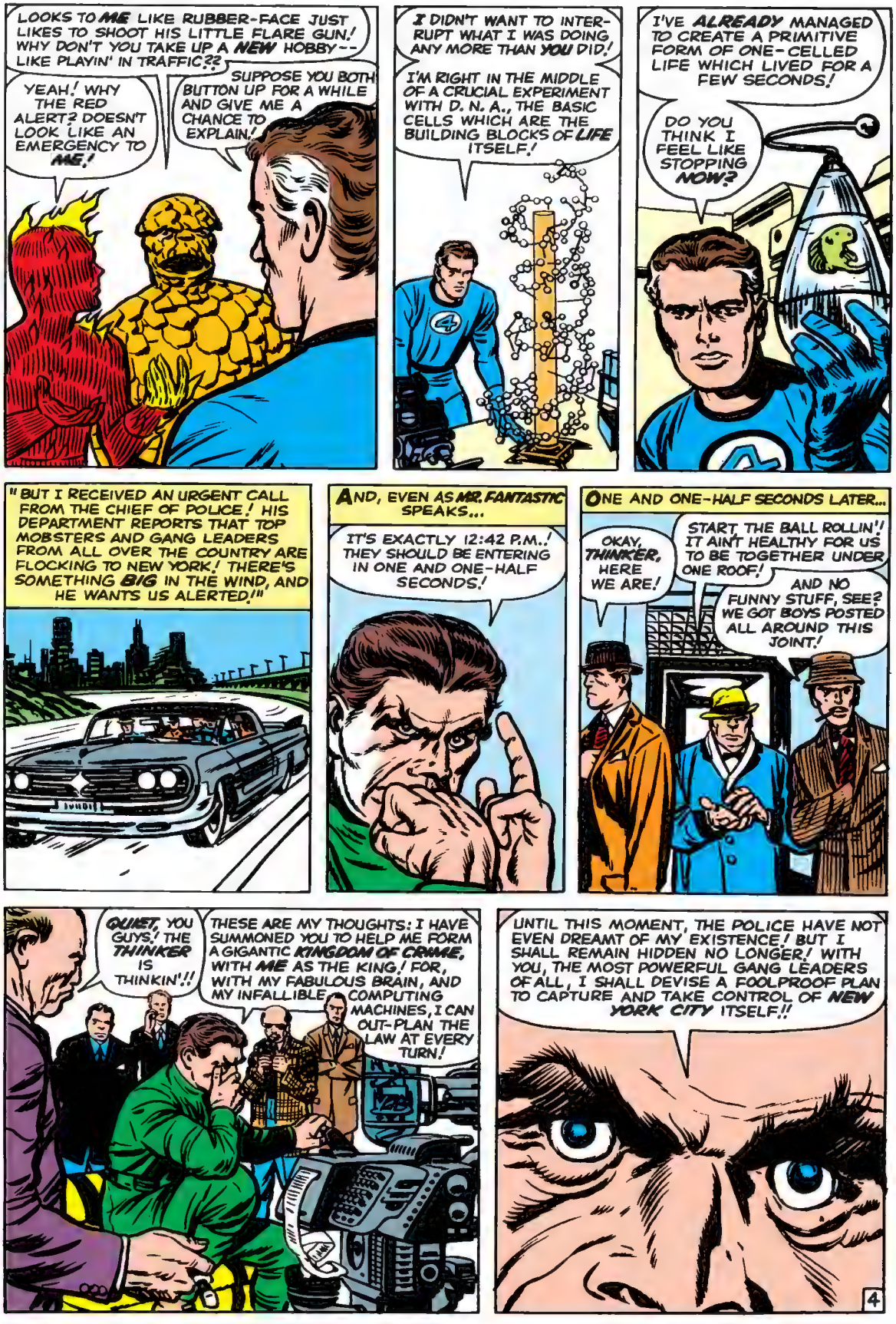
LOOK! THERE'S THE THING!
SO, THE UGLY LUMP GOT OUR LOVE-LETTER!
YOO-HOO, PRETTY BOY! HERE WE ARE!
WE'RE WAITIN' FOR YOU, FAT-HEAD!

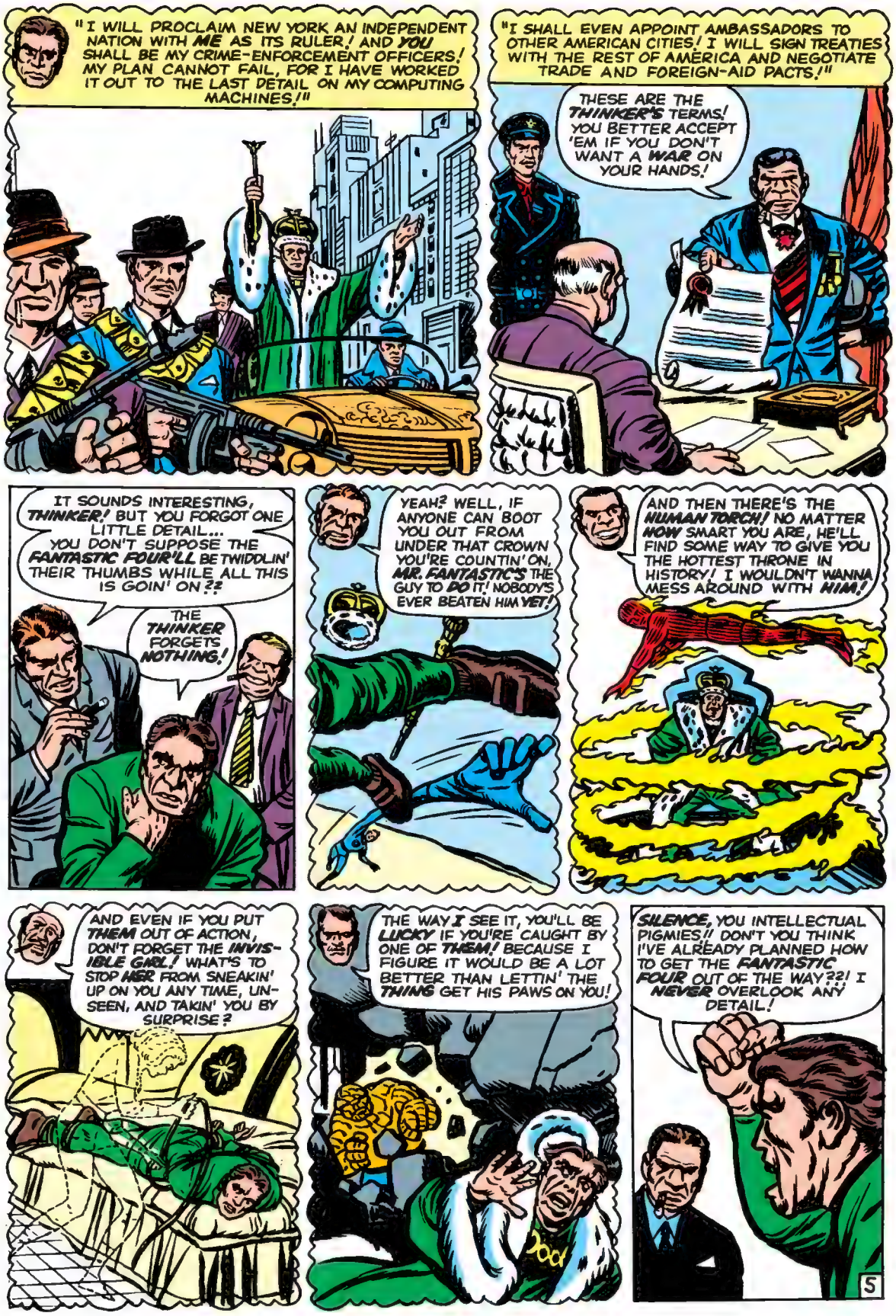
IT'S THEM! ON THE ROOF!
DON'T GO 'WAY, CREEPS! I'LL TOSS YA A LITTLE BOUQUET!

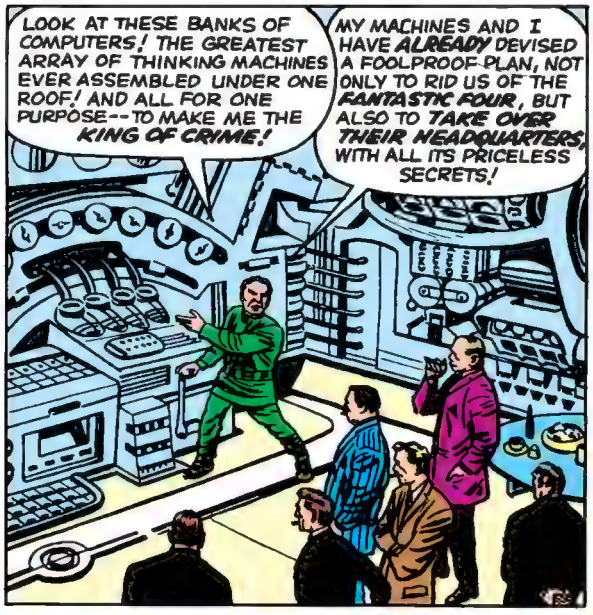

CRIPES! JUST WHEN THE PARTY WAS GETTIN' STARTED!
4

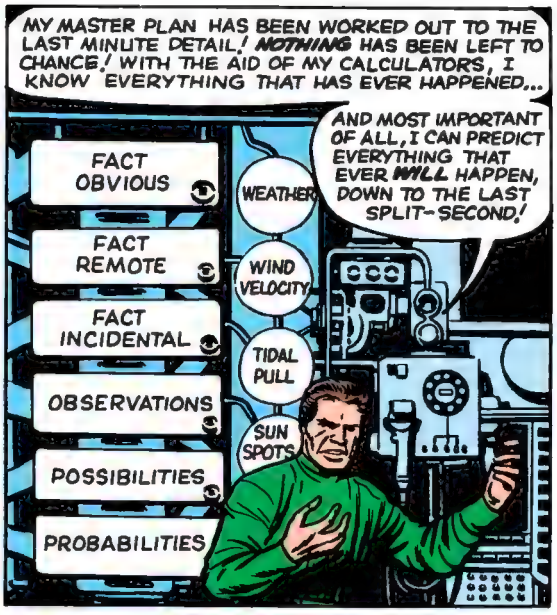

WE KNEW IT! HE'S SCARED OF US!
WHERE YOU GOIN', THING--HOME TO GET HELP?
AWW, DID THE NICE LITTLE THING FORGET TO BRING HIS NURSEMAIDS! HAW HAW!
SO HELP ME--ONE OF THESE DAYS--ONE OF THESE DAYS--!!!

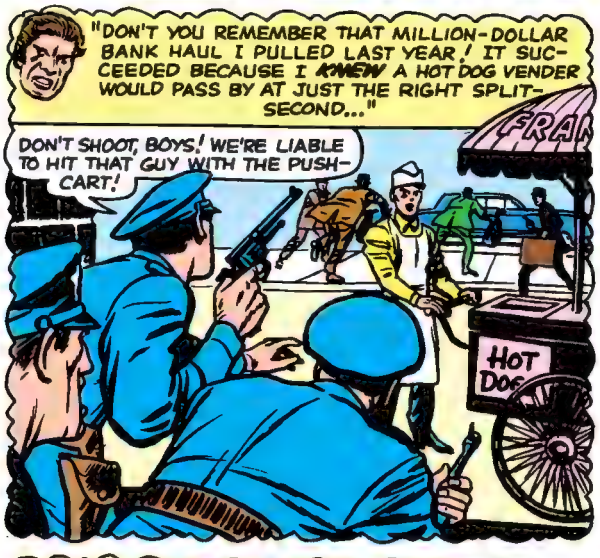

MINUTES LATER, AT THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S READY ROOM...
COME IN, BEN! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
REED DIDN'T WANT TO EXPLAIN UNTIL WE WERE ALL TOGETHER!
WELL NOW, AIN'T THAT REAL NEIGHBORLY OF HIM!!
OKAY, NOW WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, REED?
3

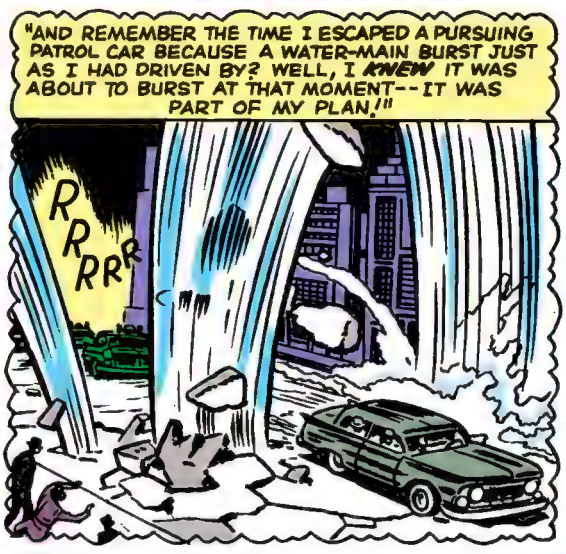

LOOKS TO ME LIKE RUBBER-FACE JUST LIKES TO SHOOT HIS LITTLE FLARE GUN! WHY DON'T YOU TAKE UP A NEW HOBBY--LIKE PLAYIN' IN TRAFFIC??
YEAH! WHY THE RED ALERT? DOESN'T LOOK LIKE AN EMERGENCY TO ME!
SUPPOSE YOU BOTH BUTTON UP FOR A WHILE AND GIVE ME A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN!
I DIDN'T WANT TO INTERRUPT WHAT I WAS DOING ANY MORE THAN YOU DID!
I'M RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A CRUCIAL EXPERIMENT WITH D. N. A., THE BASIC CELLS WHICH ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIFE ITSELF!
I'VE ALREADY MANAGED TO CREATE A PRIMITIVE FORM OF ONE-CELLED LIFE WHICH LIVED FOR A FEW SECONDS!
DO YOU THINK I FEEL LIKE STOPPING NOW?
"BUT I RECEIVED AN URGENT CALL FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE! HIS DEPARTMENT REPORTS THAT TOP MOBSTERS AND GANG LEADERS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ARE FLOCKING TO NEW YORK! THERE'S SOMETHING BIG IN THE WIND, AND HE WANTS US ALERTED!"
AND, EVEN AS MR. FANTASTIC SPEAKS...
IT'S EXACTLY 12:42 P.M.! THEY SHOULD BE ENTERING IN ONE AND ONE-HALF SECONDS!
ONE AND ONE-HALF SECONDS LATER...
OKAY, THINKER, HERE WE ARE!
START THE BALL ROLLIN'! IT AIN'T HEALTHY FOR US TO BE TOGETHER UNDER ONE ROOF!
AND NO FUNNY STUFF, SEE? WE GOT BOYS POSTED ALL AROUND THIS JOINT!
QUIET, YOU GUYS! THE THINKER IS THINKIN'!!
THESE ARE MY THOUGHTS: I HAVE SUMMONED YOU TO HELP ME FORM A GIGANTIC KINGDOM OF CRIME, WITH ME AS THE KING! FOR, WITH MY FABULOUS BRAIN, AND MY INFALLIBLE COMPUTING MACHINES, I CAN OUT-PLAN THE LAW AT EVERY TURN!
UNTIL THIS MOMENT, THE POLICE HAVE NOT EVEN DREAMT OF MY EXISTENCE! BUT I SHALL REMAIN HIDDEN NO LONGER! WITH YOU, THE MOST POWERFUL GANG LEADERS OF ALL, I SHALL DEVISE A FOOLPROOF PLAN TO CAPTURE AND TAKE CONTROL OF NEW YORK CITY ITSELF!!
4

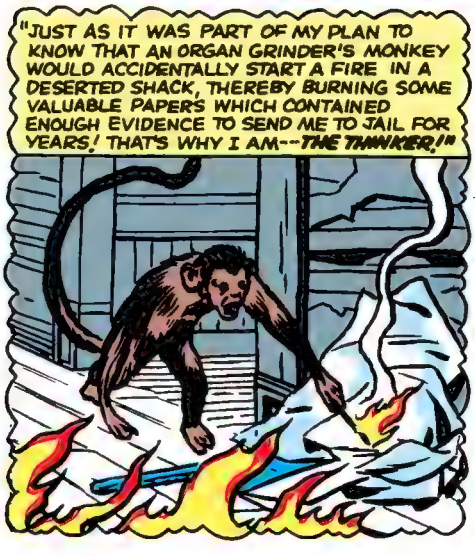

"I WILL PROCLAIM NEW YORK AN INDEPENDENT NATION WITH ME AS ITS RULER! AND YOU SHALL BE MY CRIME-ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS! MY PLAN CANNOT FAIL, FOR I HAVE WORKED IT OUT TO THE LAST DETAIL ON MY COMPUTING MACHINES!"
"I SHALL EVEN APPOINT AMBASSADORS TO OTHER AMERICAN CITIES! I WILL SIGN TREATIES WITH THE REST OF AMERICA AND NEGOTIATE TRADE AND FOREIGN-AID PACTS!"
THESE ARE THE THINKER'S TERMS! YOU BETTER ACCEPT 'EM IF YOU DON'T WANT A WAR ON YOUR HANDS!
IT SOUNDS INTERESTING, THINKER! BUT YOU FORGOT ONE LITTLE DETAIL... YOU DON'T SUPPOSE THE FANTASTIC FOUR'LL BE TWIDDLIN' THEIR THUMBS WHILE ALL THIS IS GOIN' ON??
THE THINKER FORGETS NOTHING!
YEAH? WELL, IF ANYONE CAN BOOT YOU OUT FROM UNDER THAT CROWN YOU'RE COUNTIN' ON, MR. FANTASTIC'S THE GUY TO DO IT! NOBODY'S EVER BEATEN HIM YET!
AND THEN THERE'S THE HUMAN TORCH! NO MATTER HOW SMART YOU ARE, HE'LL FIND SOME WAY TO GIVE YOU THE HOTTEST THRONE IN HISTORY! I WOULDN'T WANNA MESS AROUND WITH HIM!
AND EVEN IF YOU PUT THEM OUT OF ACTION, DON'T FORGET THE INVISIBLE GIRL! WHAT'S TO STOP HER FROM SNEAKIN' UP ON YOU ANY TIME, UNSEEN, AND TAKIN' YOU BY SURPRISE?
THE WAY I SEE IT, YOU'LL BE LUCKY IF YOU'RE CAUGHT BY ONE OF THEM! BECAUSE I FIGURE IT WOULD BE A LOT BETTER THAN LETTIN' THE THING GET HIS PAWS ON YOU!
SOCK
SILENCE, YOU INTELLECTUAL PIGMIES!! DON'T YOU THINK I'VE ALREADY PLANNED HOW TO GET THE FANTASTIC FOUR OUT OF THE WAY??! I NEVER OVERLOOK ANY DETAIL!
5


LOOK AT THESE BANKS OF COMPUTERS! THE GREATEST ARRAY OF THINKING MACHINES EVER ASSEMBLED UNDER ONE ROOF! AND ALL FOR ONE PURPOSE--TO MAKE ME THE KING OF CRIME!
MY MACHINES AND I HAVE ALREADY DEVISED A FOOLPROOF PLAN, NOT ONLY TO RID US OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, BUT ALSO TO TAKE OVER THEIR HEADQUARTERS, WITH ALL ITS PRICELESS SECRETS!


MY MASTER PLAN HAS BEEN WORKED OUT TO THE LAST MINUTE DETAIL! NOTHING HAS BEEN LEFT TO CHANCE! WITH THE AID OF MY CALCULATORS, I KNOW EVERYTHING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED...
FACT OBVIOUS
FACT REMOTE
FACT INCIDENTAL
OBSERVATIONS
POSSIBILITIES
PROBABILITIES
WEATHER
WIND VELOCITY
TIDAL PULL
SUN SPOTS
AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, I CAN PREDICT EVERYTHING THAT EVER WILL HAPPEN, DOWN TO THE LAST SPLIT-SECOND!

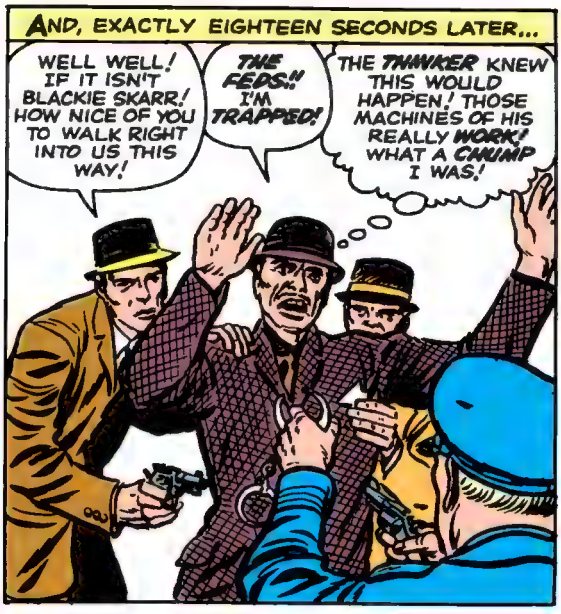

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER THAT MILLION-DOLLAR BANK HAUL I PULLED LAST YEAR! IT SUCCEEDED BECAUSE I KNEW A HOT DOG VENDER WOULD PASS BY AT JUST THE RIGHT SPLIT-SECOND..."
DON'T SHOOT, BOYS! WE'RE LIABLE TO HIT THAT GUY WITH THE PUSH-CART!
HOT DOG

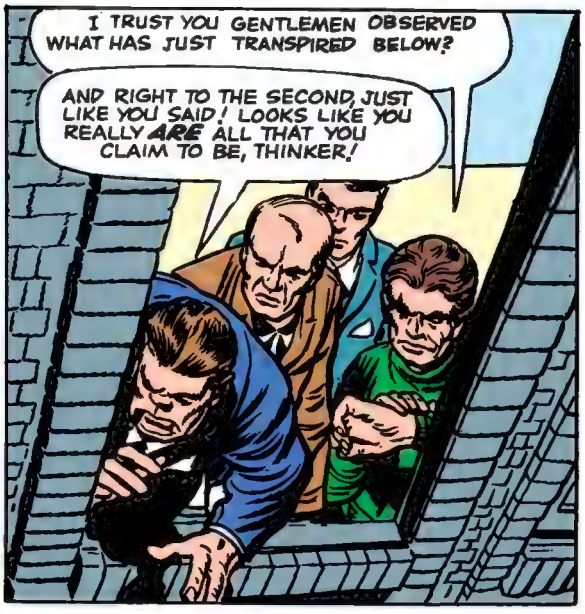

"AND REMEMBER THE TIME I ESCAPED A PURSUING PATROL CAR BECAUSE A WATER-MAIN BURST JUST AS I HAD DRIVEN BY? WELL, I KNEW IT WAS ABOUT TO BURST AT THAT MOMENT--IT WAS PART OF MY PLAN!"
RRRRR


"JUST AS IT WAS PART OF MY PLAN TO KNOW THAT AN ORGAN GRINDER'S MONKEY WOULD ACCIDENTALLY START A FIRE IN A DESERTED SHACK, THEREBY BURNING SOME VALUABLE PAPERS WHICH CONTAINED ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO SEND ME TO JAIL FOR YEARS! THAT'S WHY I AM--THE THINKER!"

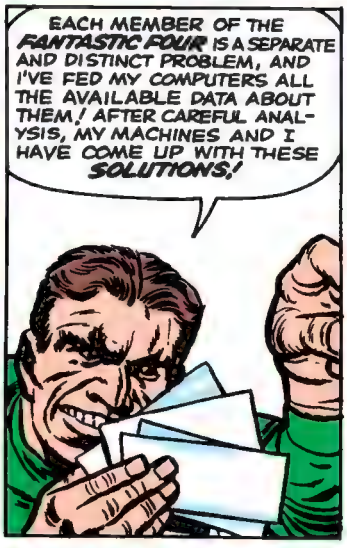
YEAH? WELL, YOU MAY BE SNOWIN' THESE OTHER JOKERS, BUT I AINT BUYIN'! I'M CUTTIN' OUT!
NATURALLY! I KNEW YOU WOULD!

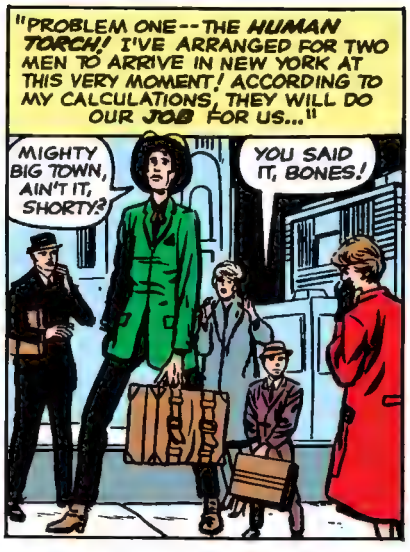
NUTS! YOU'RE JUST A LOTTA TALK! ANYTIME SOMETHIN' HAPPENS, YOU SAY YOU EXPECTED IT! YOU'RE JUST A PHONY, MAC!
AM I? IN EXACTLY EIGHTEEN SECONDS, YOU WILL REALIZE HOW WRONG YOU WERE! NOW GET OUT!


AND, EXACTLY EIGHTEEN SECONDS LATER...
WELL WELL! IF IT ISN'T BLACKIE SKARR! HOW NICE OF YOU TO WALK RIGHT INTO US THIS WAY!
THE FEDS!! I'M TRAPPED!
THE THINKER KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN! THOSE MACHINES OF HIS REALLY WORK! WHAT A CHUMP I WAS!

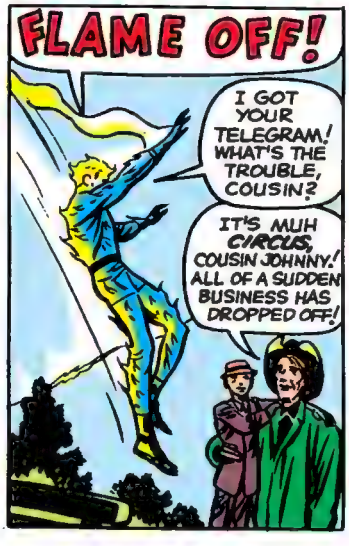

I TRUST YOU GENTLEMEN OBSERVED WHAT HAS JUST TRANSPIRED BELOW?
AND RIGHT TO THE SECOND, JUST LIKE YOU SAID! LOOKS LIKE YOU REALLY ARE ALL THAT YOU CLAIM TO BE, THINKER!

OKAY, THINKER, WE'RE WITH YA, ALL THE WAY! BUT HOW ARE YA GONNA HANDLE THE FANTASTIC FOUR?!?
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THAT PROJECT FOR MONTHS! WATCH--

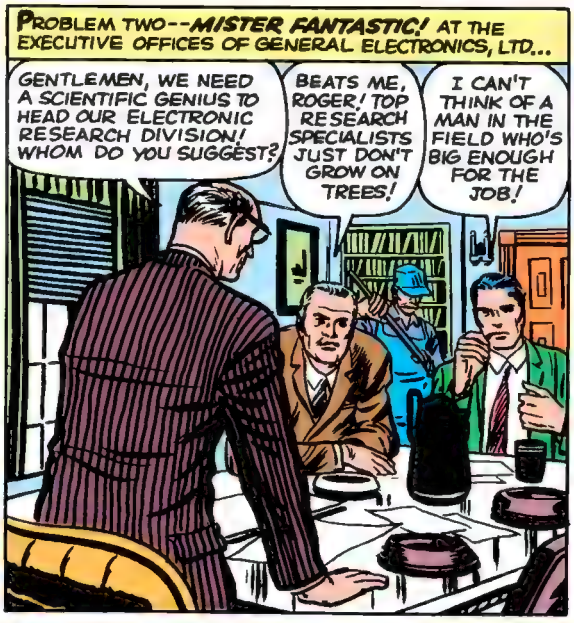

EACH MEMBER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR IS A SEPARATE AND DISTINCT PROBLEM, AND I'VE FED MY COMPUTERS ALL THE AVAILABLE DATA ABOUT THEM! AFTER CAREFUL ANALYSIS, MY MACHINES AND I HAVE COME UP WITH THESE SOLUTIONS!

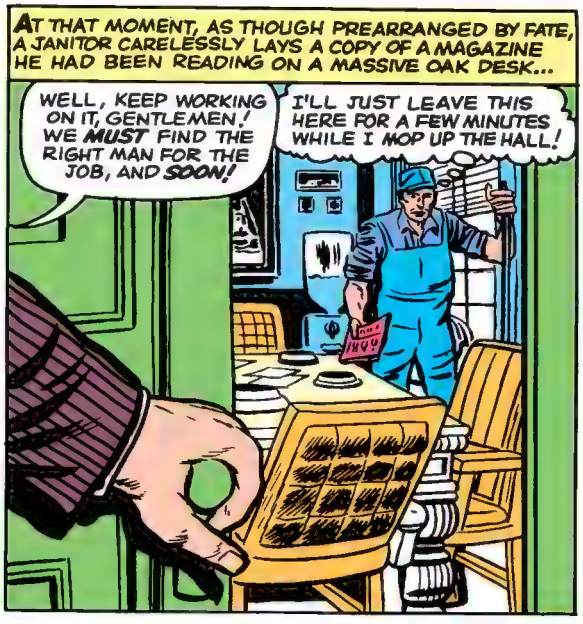

"PROBLEM ONE--THE HUMAN TORCH! I'VE ARRANGED FOR TWO MEN TO ARRIVE IN NEW YORK AT THIS VERY MOMENT! ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, THEY WILL DO OUR JOB FOR US..."
MIGHTY BIG TOWN, AIN'T IT, SHORTY?
YOU SAID IT, BONES!

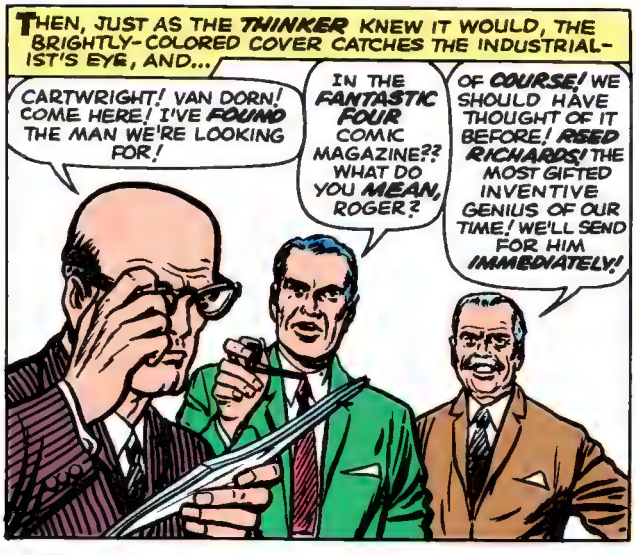
THAR HE IS NOW, RIGHT ON TIME! HI, COUSIN JOHNNY!
COUSIN BONES! WELCOME TO NEW YORK!
MAN! HE SURE IS A CORKER, ISN'T HE? LOOK AT HIM FLAME AROUND UP THERE!


FLAME OFF!
I GOT YOUR TELEGRAM! WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, COUSIN?
IT'S MUH CIRCUS, COUSIN JOHNNY! ALL OF A SUDDEN BUSINESS HAS DROPPED OFF!

I NEED ME A REAL STAR ATTRACTION TO GET THE CROWDS BACK AGAIN--OR ELSE I'LL LOSE EVERYTHING! I WAS WONDERIN' ABOUT YOU, JOHNNY...?
GOSH! A CHANCE TO BE A CIRCUS STAR!! IF ONLY I COULD!!


PROBLEM TWO--MISTER FANTASTIC! AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF GENERAL ELECTRONICS, LTD...
GENTLEMEN, WE NEED A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS TO HEAD OUR ELECTRONIC RESEARCH DIVISION! WHOM DO YOU SUGGEST?
BEATS ME, ROGER! TOP RESEARCH SPECIALISTS JUST DON'T GROW ON TREES!
I CAN'T THINK OF A MAN IN THE FIELD WHO'S BIG ENOUGH FOR THE JOB!


AT THAT MOMENT, AS THOUGH PREARRANGED BY FATE, A JANITOR CARELESSLY LAYS A COPY OF A MAGAZINE HE HAD BEEN READING ON A MASSIVE OAK DESK...
WELL, KEEP WORKING ON IT, GENTLEMEN! WE MUST FIND THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB, AND SOON!
I'LL JUST LEAVE THIS HERE FOR A FEW MINUTES WHILE I MOP UP THE HALL!


THEN, JUST AS THE THINKER KNEW IT WOULD, THE BRIGHTLY-COLORED COVER CATCHES THE INDUSTRIALIST'S EYE, AND...
CARTWRIGHT! VAN DORN! COME HERE! I'VE FOUND THE MAN WE'RE LOOKING FOR!
IN THE FANTASTIC FOUR COMIC MAGAZINE?? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ROGER?
OF COURSE! WE SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF IT BEFORE! REED RICHARDS! THE MOST GIFTED INVENTIVE GENIUS OF OUR TIME! WE'LL SEND FOR HIM IMMEDIATELY!

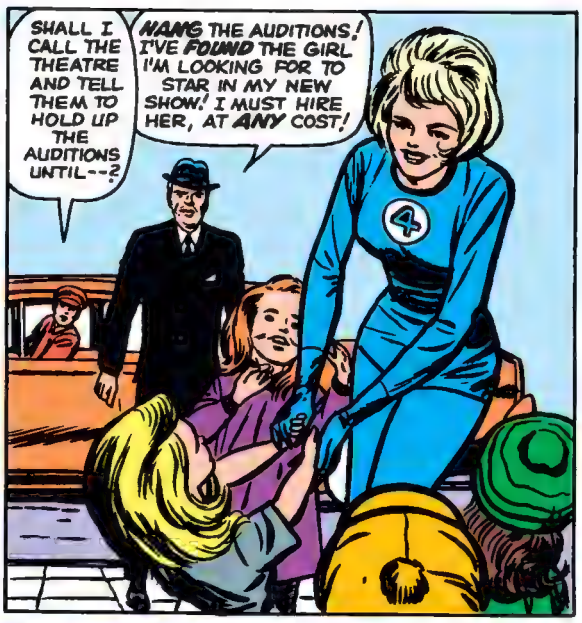
PROBLEM THREE-- THE THING! IN A LOCAL GYM, A SHIFTY-EYED WRESTLING MANAGER MAKES BEN GRIMM A TEMPTING OFFER...
I TELL YA, THING, IF YA SIGN UP WITH ME WE CAN MAKE A FORTUNE! YOU'D BE THE BIGGEST WRESTLIN' ATTRACTION SINCE STRANGLER LEWIS!
YEAH YEAH, I KNOW! IT SOUNDS GOOD, BUT I GOT OTHER THINGS TO DO!

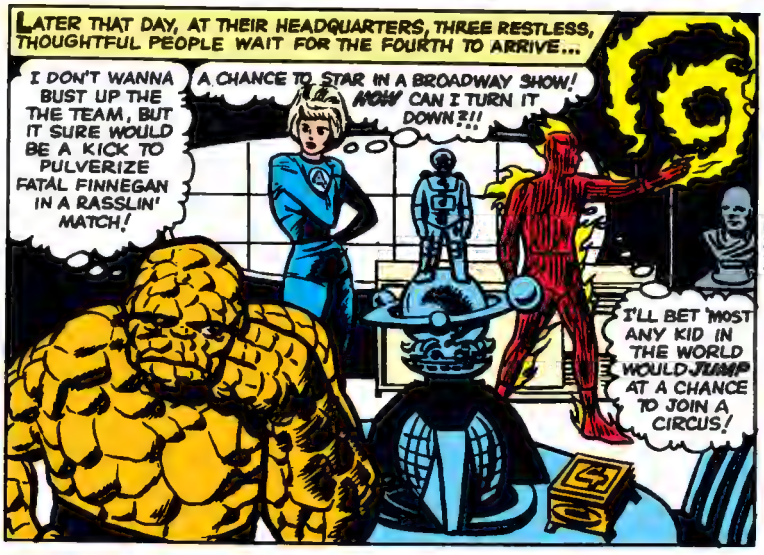
THAT SO? COULD BE YOU'RE AFRAID TO MEET FATAL FINNEGAN, THE IDOL OF THE YANCY STREET GANG?!!
ME, AFRAID??!

I DON'T LIKE THAT KINDA TALK, SQUIRT!

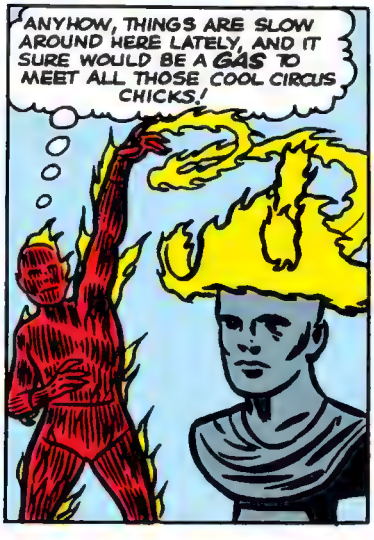
NOW JUST YOU WAIT THERE TILL I GET BACK! I GOTTA TALK THIS OVER WITH MY PARTNERS!
S-SURE, THING! I-I'LL -ULP- HANG AROUND!

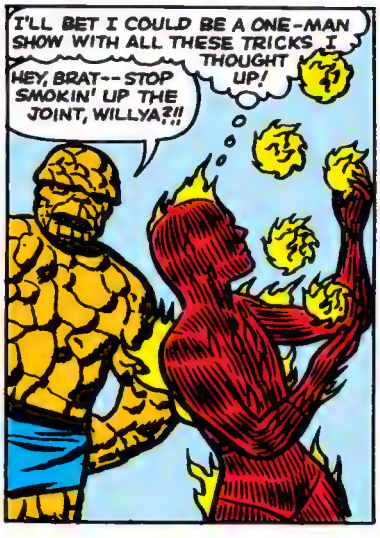
PROBLEM FOUR--THE INVISIBLE GIRL! AT THE ENTRANCE TO A LOCAL ORPHANAGE, WHERE SUE STORM HAS JUST ENTERTAINED THE CHILDREN...
BLAST IT, HIGGENS! I'M A HALF-HOUR LATE FOR REHEARSAL! HOW DID WE WIND UP IN THIS OUT-OF-THE-WAY NEIGHBORHOOD??
I DON'T KNOW, SIR! IT'S AS THOUGH SOMEONE DELIBERATELY PUT UP DETOUR SIGNS ALL OVER THE CITY!
SCHOOL STREET STOP

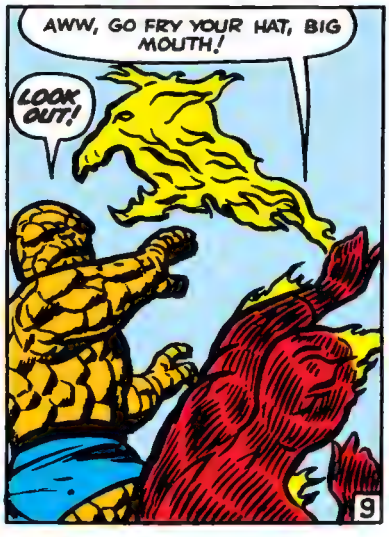

SHALL I CALL THE THEATRE AND TELL THEM TO HOLD UP THE AUDITIONS UNTIL--?
NAMM THE AUDITIONS! I'VE FOUND THE GIRL I'M LOOKING FOR TO STAR IN MY NEW SHOW! I MUST HIRE HER, AT ANY COST!

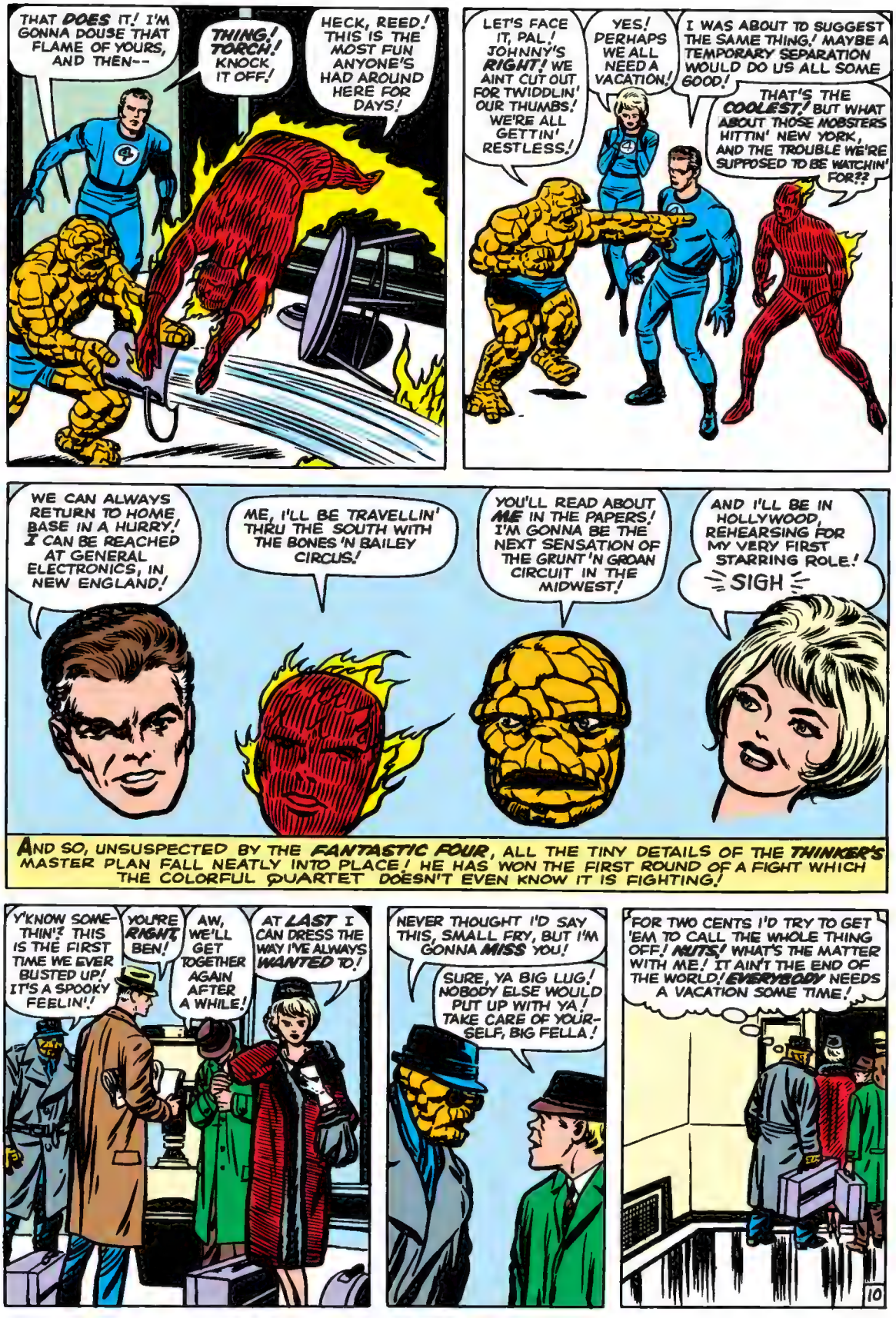

LATER THAT DAY, AT THEIR HEADQUARTERS, THREE RESTLESS, THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE WAIT FOR THE FOURTH TO ARRIVE...
I DON'T WANNA BUST UP THE THE TEAM, BUT IT SURE WOULD BE A KICK TO PULVERIZE FATAL FINNEGAN IN A RASSLIN' MATCH!
A CHANCE TO STAR IN A BROADWAY SHOW! NOW CAN I TURN IT DOWN?!!
I'LL BET 'MOST ANY KID IN THE WORLD WOULD JUMP AT A CHANCE TO JOIN A CIRCUS!

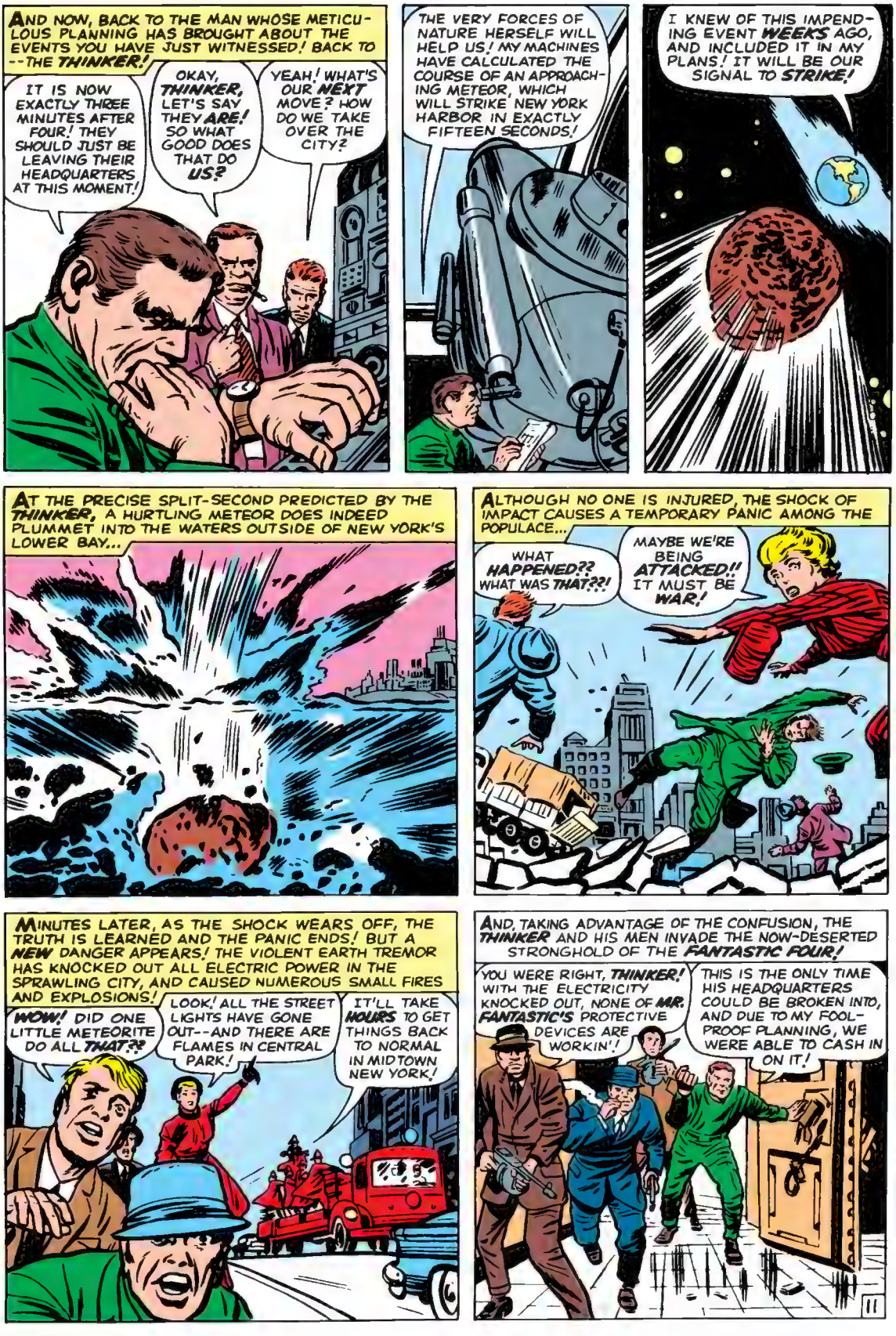
AND COUSIN BONES REALLY NEEDS ME TO HELP HIM GET BACK ON HIS FEET! HE SAYS IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH SOMEONE HAD BEEN PLANNING FOR HIS SHOW TO FAIL, BECAUSE HE'S HAD A DOZEN SERIOUS ACCIDENTS LATELY!

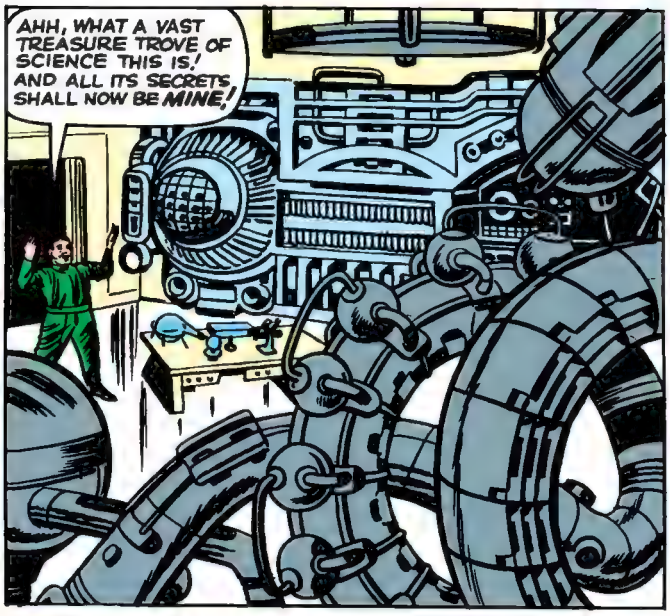

ANYHOW, THINGS ARE SLOW AROUND HERE LATELY, AND IT SURE WOULD BE A GAS TO MEET ALL THOSE COOL CIRCUS CHICKS!


I'LL BET I COULD BE A ONE-MAN SHOW WITH ALL THESE TRICKS I THOUGHT UP!
HEY, BRAT--STOP SMOKIN' UP THE JOINT, WILLYA?!!

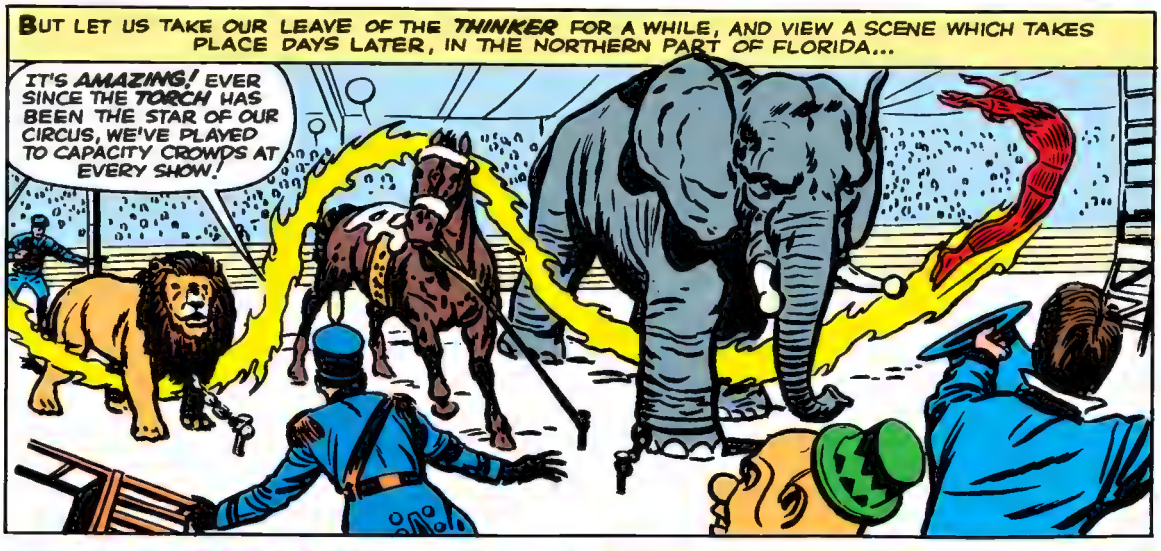

AWW, GO FRY YOUR HAT, BIG MOUTH!
LOOK OUT!

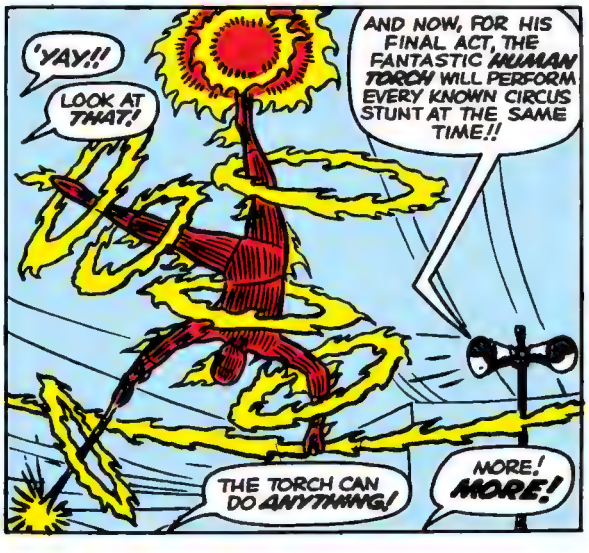

THAT DOES IT! I'M GONNA DOUSE THAT FLAME OF YOURS, AND THEN--
THING! TORCH! KNOCK IT OFF!
HECK, REED! THIS IS THE MOST FUN ANYONE'S HAD AROUND HERE FOR DAYS!
LET'S FACE IT, PAL! JOHNNY'S RIGHT! WE AINT CUT OUT FOR TWIDDLIN' OUR THUMBS! WE'RE ALL GETTIN' RESTLESS!
YES! PERHAPS WE ALL NEED A VACATION!
I WAS ABOUT TO SUGGEST THE SAME THING! MAYBE A TEMPORARY SEPARATION WOULD DO US ALL SOME GOOD!
THAT'S THE COOLEST! BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE MOBSTERS HITTIN' NEW YORK, AND THE TROUBLE WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE WATCHIN' FOR??
WE CAN ALWAYS RETURN TO HOME BASE IN A HURRY! I CAN BE REACHED AT GENERAL ELECTRONICS, IN NEW ENGLAND!
ME, I'LL BE TRAVELLIN' THRU THE SOUTH WITH THE BONES 'N BAILEY CIRCUS!
YOU'LL READ ABOUT ME IN THE PAPERS! I'M GONNA BE THE NEXT SENSATION OF THE GRUNT 'N GROAN CIRCUIT IN THE MIDWEST!
AND I'LL BE IN HOLLYWOOD, REHEARSING FOR MY VERY FIRST STARRING ROLE! SIGH
AND SO, UNSUSPECTED BY THE FANTASTIC FOUR, ALL THE TINY DETAILS OF THE THINKER'S MASTER PLAN FALL NEATLY INTO PLACE! HE HAS WON THE FIRST ROUND OF A FIGHT WHICH THE COLORFUL QUARTET DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT IS FIGHTING!
Y'KNOW SOMETHIN'? THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE EVER BUSTED UP! IT'S A SPOOKY FEELIN'!
YOU'RE RIGHT, BEN!
AW, WE'LL GET TOGETHER AGAIN AFTER A WHILE!
AT LAST I CAN DRESS THE WAY I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY THIS, SMALL FRY, BUT I'M GONNA MISS YOU!
SURE, YA BIG LUG! NOBODY ELSE WOULD PUT UP WITH YA! TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, BIG FELLA!
FOR TWO CENTS I'D TRY TO GET 'EM TO CALL THE WHOLE THING OFF! NUTS! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ME! IT AIN'T THE END OF THE WORLD! EVERYBODY NEEDS A VACATION SOME TIME!
10

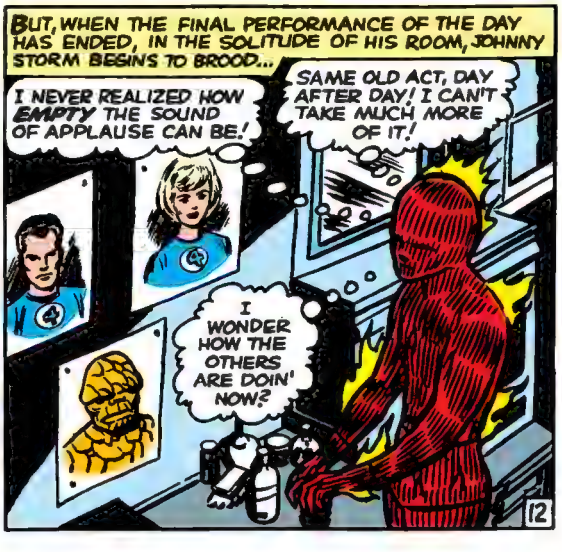

AND NOW, BACK TO THE MAN WHOSE METICULOUS PLANNING HAS BROUGHT ABOUT THE EVENTS YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED! BACK TO --THE THINKER!
IT IS NOW EXACTLY THREE MINUTES AFTER FOUR! THEY SHOULD JUST BE LEAVING THEIR HEADQUARTERS AT THIS MOMENT!
OKAY, THINKER, LET'S SAY THEY ARE! SO WHAT GOOD DOES THAT DO US?
YEAH! WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE? HOW DO WE TAKE OVER THE CITY?
THE VERY FORCES OF NATURE HERSELF WILL HELP US! MY MACHINES HAVE CALCULATED THE COURSE OF AN APPROACHING METEOR, WHICH WILL STRIKE NEW YORK HARBOR IN EXACTLY FIFTEEN SECONDS!
I KNEW OF THIS IMPENDING EVENT WEEKS AGO, AND INCLUDED IT IN MY PLANS! IT WILL BE OUR SIGNAL TO STRIKE!
AT THE PRECISE SPLIT-SECOND PREDICTED BY THE THINKER, A HURTLING METEOR DOES INDEED PLUMMET INTO THE WATERS OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK'S LOWER BAY...
ALTHOUGH NO ONE IS INJURED, THE SHOCK OF IMPACT CAUSES A TEMPORARY PANIC AMONG THE POPULACE...
WHAT HAPPENED?? WHAT WAS THAT???
MAYBE WE'RE BEING ATTACKED!! IT MUST BE WAR!
MINUTES LATER, AS THE SHOCK WEARS OFF, THE TRUTH IS LEARNED AND THE PANIC ENDS! BUT A NEW DANGER APPEARS! THE VIOLENT EARTH TREMOR HAS KNOCKED OUT ALL ELECTRIC POWER IN THE SPRAWLING CITY, AND CAUSED NUMEROUS SMALL FIRES AND EXPLOSIONS!
WOW! DID ONE LITTLE METEORITE DO ALL THAT??
LOOK! ALL THE STREET LIGHTS HAVE GONE OUT--AND THERE ARE FLAMES IN CENTRAL PARK!
IT'LL TAKE HOURS TO GET THINGS BACK TO NORMAL IN MIDTOWN NEW YORK!
AND, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION, THE THINKER AND HIS MEN INVADE THE NOW-DESERTED STRONGHOLD OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
YOU WERE RIGHT, THINKER! WITH THE ELECTRICITY KNOCKED OUT, NONE OF MR. FANTASTIC'S PROTECTIVE DEVICES ARE WORKIN'!
THIS IS THE ONLY TIME HIS HEADQUARTERS COULD BE BROKEN INTO, AND DUE TO MY FOOL-PROOF PLANNING, WE WERE ABLE TO CASH IN ON IT!
11

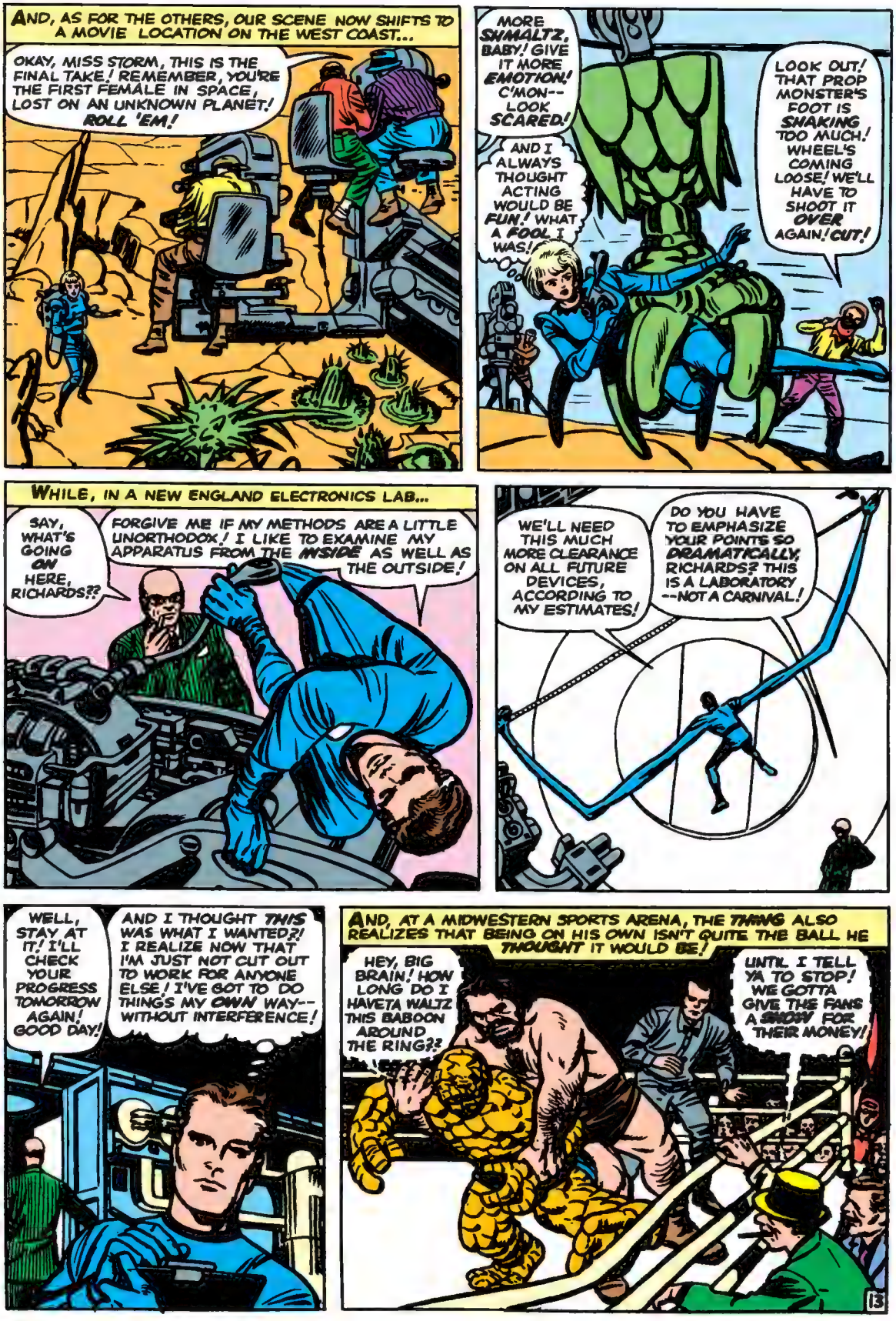

AHH, WHAT A VAST TREASURE TROVE OF SCIENCE THIS IS! AND ALL ITS SECRETS SHALL NOW BE MINE!

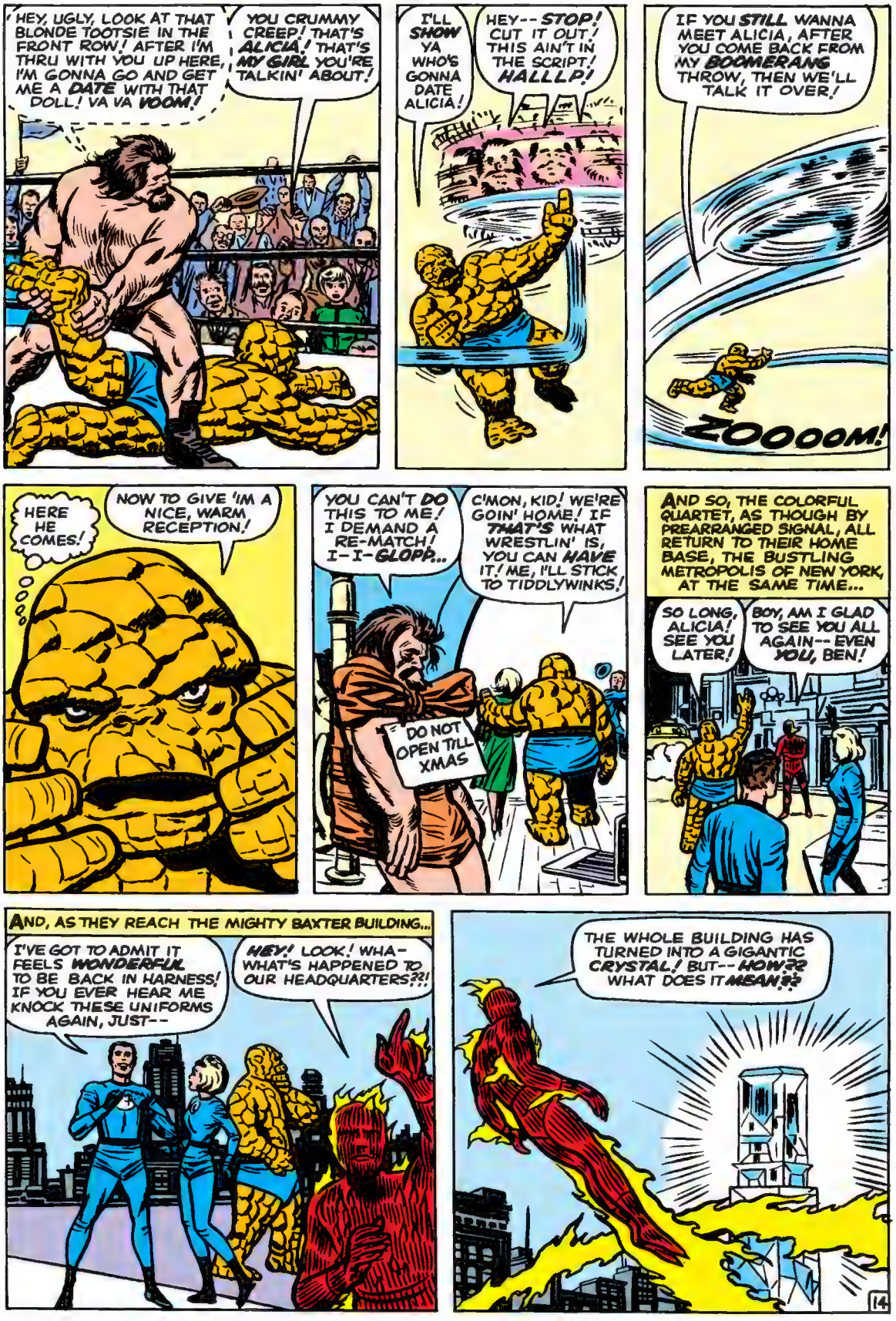
THIS IS EVEN BETTER THAN I EXPECTED!! HERE ARE MR. FANTASTIC'S NOTES CONCERNING HIS WORK WITH D.N.A., THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIFE ITSELF!
USING THIS INFORMATION, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO CREATE A NEW FORM OF LIFE-- ONE WHICH WILL SERVE ONLY-- THE THINKER!!


BUT LET US TAKE OUR LEAVE OF THE THINKER FOR A WHILE, AND VIEW A SCENE WHICH TAKES PLACE DAYS LATER, IN THE NORTHERN PART OF FLORIDA...
IT'S AMAZING! EVER SINCE THE TORCH HAS BEEN THE STAR OF OUR CIRCUS, WE'VE PLAYED TO CAPACITY CROWDS AT EVERY SHOW!


'YAY!!
LOOK AT THAT!
AND NOW, FOR HIS FINAL ACT, THE FANTASTIC HUMAN TORCH WILL PERFORM EVERY KNOWN CIRCUS STUNT AT THE SAME TIME!!
THE TORCH CAN DO ANYTHING!
MORE! MORE!


BUT, WHEN THE FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE DAY HAS ENDED, IN THE SOLITUDE OF HIS ROOM, JOHNNY STORM BEGINS TO BROOD...
I NEVER REALIZED HOW EMPTY THE SOUND OF APPLAUSE CAN BE!
SAME OLD ACT, DAY AFTER DAY! I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF IT!
I WONDER HOW THE OTHERS ARE DOIN' NOW?


AND, AS FOR THE OTHERS, OUR SCENE NOW SHIFTS TO A MOVIE LOCATION ON THE WEST COAST...
OKAY, MISS STORM, THIS IS THE FINAL TAKE! REMEMBER, YOU'RE THE FIRST FEMALE IN SPACE, LOST ON AN UNKNOWN PLANET! ROLL 'EM!
MORE SHMALTZ, BABY! GIVE IT MORE EMOTION! C'MON-- LOOK SCARED!
AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT ACTING WOULD BE FUN! WHAT A FOOL I WAS!
LOOK OUT! THAT PROP MONSTER'S FOOT IS SHAKING TOO MUCH! WHEEL'S COMING LOOSE! WE'LL HAVE TO SHOOT IT OVER AGAIN! CUT!
WHILE, IN A NEW ENGLAND ELECTRONICS LAB...
SAY, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, RICHARDS??
FORGIVE ME IF MY METHODS ARE A LITTLE UNORTHODOX! I LIKE TO EXAMINE MY APPARATUS FROM THE INSIDE AS WELL AS THE OUTSIDE!
WE'LL NEED THIS MUCH MORE CLEARANCE ON ALL FUTURE DEVICES, ACCORDING TO MY ESTIMATES!
DO YOU HAVE TO EMPHASIZE YOUR POINTS SO DRAMATICALLY, RICHARDS? THIS IS A LABORATORY --NOT A CARNIVAL!
WELL, STAY AT IT! I'LL CHECK YOUR PROGRESS TOMORROW AGAIN! GOOD DAY!
AND I THOUGHT THIS WAS WHAT I WANTED?! I REALIZE NOW THAT I'M JUST NOT CUT OUT TO WORK FOR ANYONE ELSE! I'VE GOT TO DO THINGS MY OWN WAY-- WITHOUT INTERFERENCE!
AND, AT A MIDWESTERN SPORTS ARENA, THE THING ALSO REALIZES THAT BEING ON HIS OWN ISN'T QUITE THE BALL HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE!
HEY, BIG BRAIN! HOW LONG DO I HAVETA WALTZ THIS BABOON AROUND THE RING??
UNTIL I TELL YA TO STOP! WE GOTTA GIVE THE FANS A SHOW FOR THEIR MONEY!
13


HEY, UGLY, LOOK AT THAT BLONDE TOOTSIE IN THE FRONT ROW! AFTER I'M THRU WITH YOU UP HERE, I'M GONNA GO AND GET ME A DATE WITH THAT DOLL! VA VA VOOM!
YOU CRUMMY CREEP! THAT'S ALICIA! THAT'S MY GIRL YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT!
I'LL SHOW YA WHO'S GONNA DATE ALICIA!
HEY-- STOP! CUT IT OUT! THIS AIN'T IN THE SCRIPT! HALLLP!
IF YOU STILL WANNA MEET ALICIA, AFTER YOU COME BACK FROM MY BOOMERANG THROW, THEN WE'LL TALK IT OVER!
ZOOOOM!
HERE HE COMES!
NOW TO GIVE 'IM A NICE, WARM RECEPTION!
YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! I DEMAND A RE-MATCH! I-I-GLOPP...
C'MON, KID! WE'RE GOIN' HOME! IF THAT'S WHAT WRESTLIN' IS, YOU CAN HAVE IT! ME, I'LL STICK TO TIDDLYWINKS!
DO NOT OPEN TILL XMAS
AND SO, THE COLORFUL QUARTET, AS THOUGH BY PREARRANGED SIGNAL, ALL RETURN TO THEIR HOME BASE, THE BUSTLING METROPOLIS OF NEW YORK, AT THE SAME TIME...
SO LONG, ALICIA! SEE YOU LATER!
BOY, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN-- EVEN YOU, BEN!
AND, AS THEY REACH THE MIGHTY BAXTER BUILDING...
I'VE GOT TO ADMIT IT FEELS WONDERFUL TO BE BACK IN HARNESS! IF YOU EVER HEAR ME KNOCK THESE UNIFORMS AGAIN, JUST--
HEY! LOOK! WHA- WHAT'S HAPPENED TO OUR HEADQUARTERS?!?!
THE WHOLE BUILDING HAS TURNED INTO A GIGANTIC CRYSTAL! BUT-- HOW?? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?!?
14

IT'S INCREDIBLE! THE VERY ELEMENTS OF THE BUILDING THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN TRANSMUTED! THIS IS A NEW, UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE!
I CAN'T EVEN POKE A HOLE THRU IT! A THING LIKE THAT CAN GIVE A GUY A COMPLEX!
IT'S HEAT RESISTANT, TOO!
THIS MEANS WE'RE LOCKED OUT OF OUR OWN HEADQUARTERS!

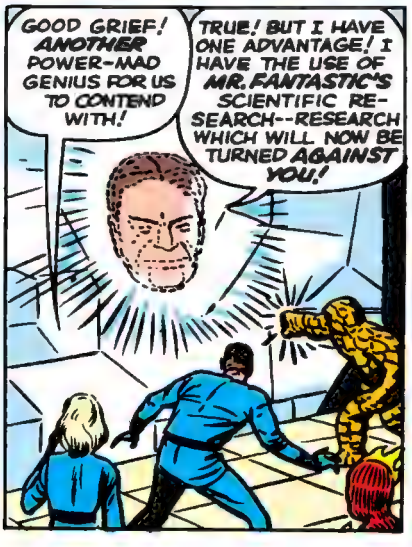
I'LL PROBE FOR CRACKS --PERHAPS THERE'S A WEAK SPOT SOMEWHERE!

PHOOY! THAT'S TOO SLOW! MEBBE I CAN JUST DIG OUR WAY IN! I'LL BE THRU THIS CONCRETE SIDEWALK IN NO TIME!

THERE'S EVEN MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE! LOOK AT ALL THE PASSERS-BY!
NO ONE SEEMS TO NOTICE WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE BUILDING! THEY DON'T EVEN SEEM TO SEE IT!

SUDDENLY, THE FACE OF THE THINKER APPEARS, PROJECTED RIGHT THRU THE STRANGE, SHIMMERING CRYSTAL WALL!
NATURALLY NO ONE NOTICES! I HAVE AN ELECTRONIC HYPNO-RAY FIELD AROUND THIS ENTIRE BUILDING! I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU--FOR I AM THE THINKER!
THE THINKER?

I'VE MODIFIED MY HYPNO-RAY SO THAT ONLY YOU FOUR ARE AWARE OF MY PRESENCE! FOR YOU ARE TO BE MY GREATEST CONQUEST! ONCE I HAVE DEFEATED THE FANTASTIC FOUR, NO POWER ON EARTH CAN STAND IN MY WAY!

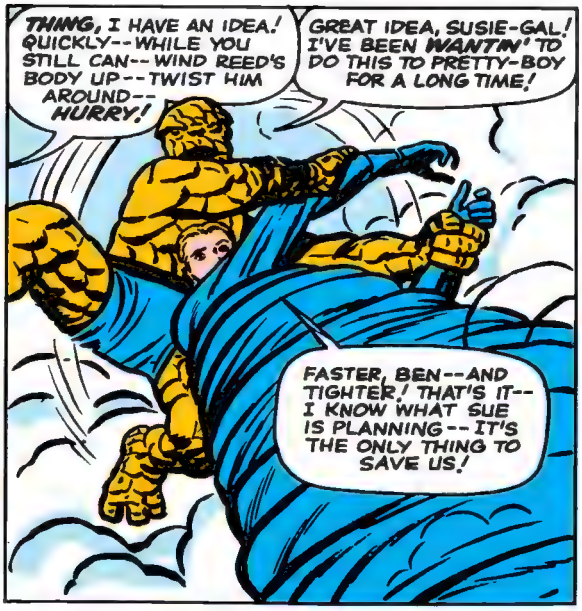

GOOD GRIEF! ANOTHER POWER-MAD GENIUS FOR US TO CONTEND WITH!
TRUE! BUT I HAVE ONE ADVANTAGE! I HAVE THE USE OF MR. FANTASTIC'S SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH--RESEARCH WHICH WILL NOW BE TURNED AGAINST YOU!

LOOK! HE FADED AWAY! AND HE LEFT AN OPENING IN THE CRYSTAL FOR US TO ENTER THRU!
HE MEANS IT! HE WANTS US TO GET INSIDE AND FIGHT HIM! HE ACTUALLY THINKS HE CAN BEAT US!
WELL--WHAT ARE WE WAITIN' FOR??

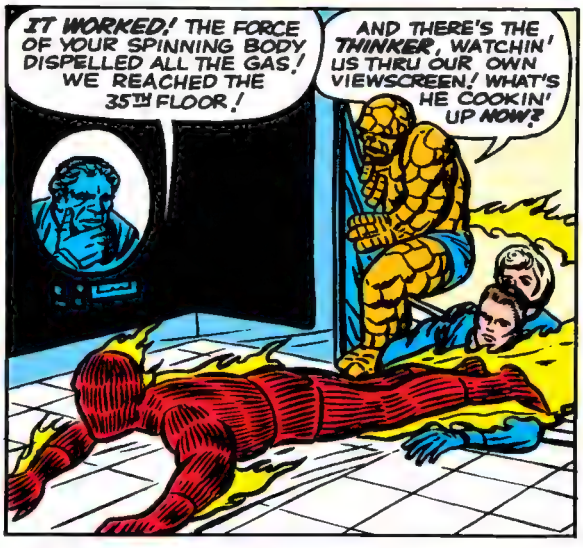
I'LL JUST TOSS A SPEEDY BLUE-FLAME FIRE-BALL IN THERE, TO MAKE SURE THERE AREN'T ANY LITTLE TRAPS WAITING FOR US!

GOOD THING YOU DID THAT, JOHNNY! HE HAD AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE RIGGED UP!
WELL, IT'S NOT GONNA BOTHER US ANY MORE! SO LET'S GO AND GIVE THAT THINKER SOMETHIN' TO REALLY THINK ABOUT!
TORCHY, OL' PAL, YOU'RE BEGINNIN' TO SOUND LIKE ME! AND THAT'S PRETTY GOOD!
YOU KIDDIN'? IF I BELIEVED YOU, I'D NEVER OPEN MY MOUTH AGAIN!
WATCH YOURSELVES! NO TELLING WHAT LITTLE SURPRISES THE THINKER HAS FOR US!
HERE THEY COME! GET 'EM!
VIBRA-GUNS! MY OWN INVENTION! THE THINKER MUST HAVE FOUND THEM IN OUR ARSENAL!
TAKE COVER! TRY TO GET OUT OF RANGE! THE VIBRA-SOUND VIBRATIONS WILL SAP ALL THE STRENGTH FROM YOU UNTIL THEY RUN OUT OF POWER!
OH, REED! WE--WE CAN'T LET HIM BEAT US WITH YOUR OWN WEAPONS!
HAVE NO FEAR, BABY-- THE THING IS HERE! THIS'LL STOP THOSE RAYS!
HE-HE'S PULLIN' THOSE WALLS TOGETHER AS IF THEY'RE LACE CURTAINS!
I DON'T WANT NO PART OF HIM! LEMME OUT OF HERE!
THEY CAN'T GET THRU STEEL-- AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THESE SPECIAL WALLS ARE MADE OF!
IT IS NOW 3:43 P.M.! YOU HAVE PASSED YOUR FIRST TEST, AS I EXPECTED YOU WOULD! BUT YOU STILL HAVE TO GET TO THE 35TH FLOOR!
JUST SIT TIGHT, BROTHER! WE'LL GET THERE--YOU CAN BET ON IT!
HE DIDN'T THINK HE COULD STOP US BY SHUTTIN' OFF THE ELEVATORS, DID HE?
TAKE IT EASY, BEN! THAT'S MY SKIN YOU'RE HANGING ONTO!
COMPLAINTS! ALL I EVER GET IS COMPLAINTS!
REED! THE THINKER HAS HURLED SOME GAS CYLINDERS AT US!
IT'S NOT ORDINARY GAS, SUE! I CAN TELL BY THE ODOR--IT'S A FORMULA OF MY OWN!
WELL, DON'T KEEP US IN THE DARK, PARTNER! WHAT DOES IT DO??
16

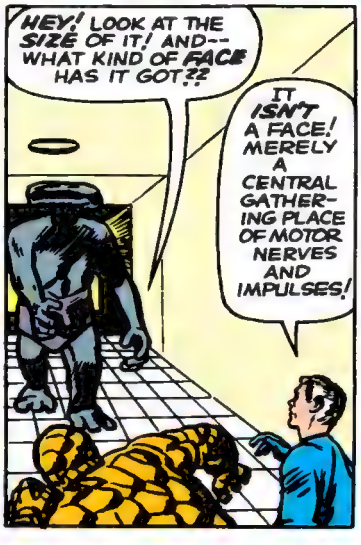
I CREATED IT TO USE AGAINST ENEMIES--TO DEFEAT THEM WITHOUT HARMING THEM! IT AFFECTS YOUR SENSE OF BALANCE--AND OF VISION! IT MAKES EVERYTHING LOOK DISTORTED TO YOU!
YEESH! I SEE WHATCHA MEAN!
4

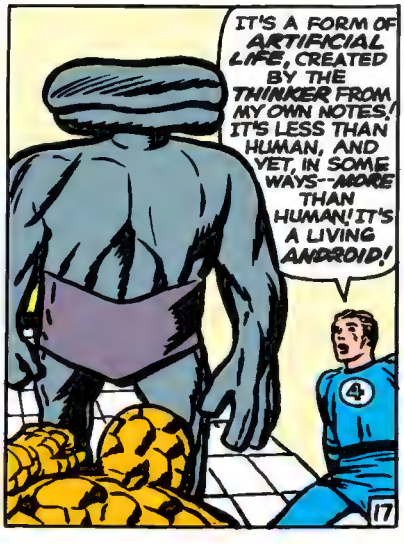

THING, I HAVE AN IDEA! QUICKLY--WHILE YOU STILL CAN--WIND REED'S BODY UP--TWIST HIM AROUND--HURRY!
GREAT IDEA, SUSIE-GAL! I'VE BEEN WANTIN' TO DO THIS TO PRETTY-BOY FOR A LONG TIME!
FASTER, BEN--AND TIGHTER! THAT'S IT--I KNOW WHAT SUE IS PLANNING--IT'S THE ONLY THING TO SAVE US!

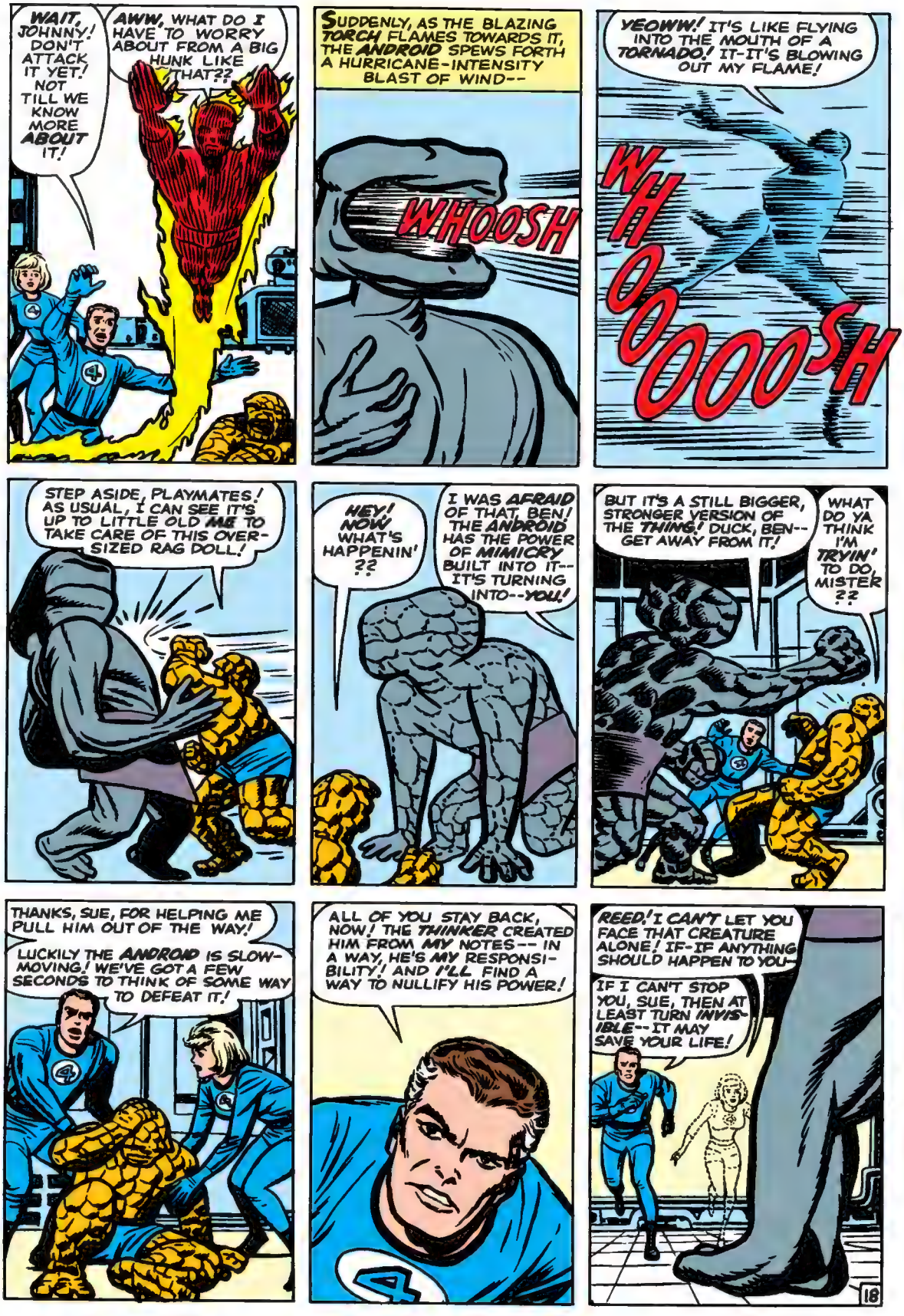
NOW LET GO! AHHHHH--
TWANNG

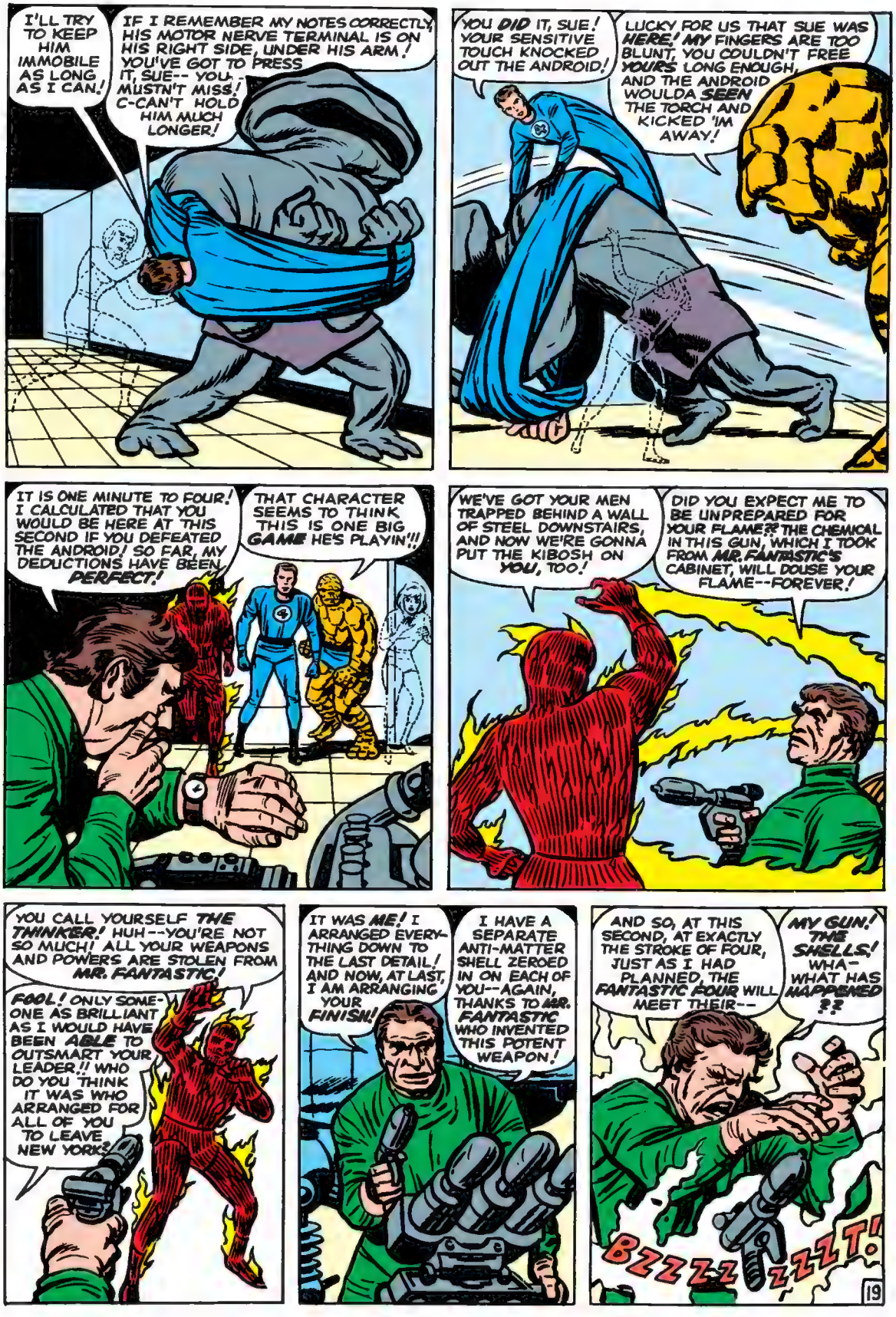

IT WORKED! THE FORCE OF YOUR SPINNING BODY DISPELLED ALL THE GAS! WE REACHED THE 35TH FLOOR!
AND THERE'S THE THINKER, WATCHIN' US THRU OUR OWN VIEWSCREEN! WHAT'S HE COOKIN' UP NOW?

LOOKING DOWN THE LONG CORRIDOR, THE FANTASTIC FOUR REALIZE THEY WILL NOT HAVE LONG TO WAIT FOR THEIR ANSWER...
FOR THE LUVVA PETE! WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT??
KEEP BACK, BEN! IT SEEMS TO BE ALIVE--AND YET--IT CERTAINLY ISN'T HUMAN!


HEY! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF IT! AND--WHAT KIND OF FACE HAS IT GOT??
IT ISN'T A FACE! MERELY A CENTRAL GATHERING PLACE OF MOTOR NERVES AND IMPULSES!


IT'S A FORM OF ARTIFICIAL LIFE, CREATED BY THE THINKER FROM MY OWN NOTES! IT'S LESS THAN HUMAN, AND YET, IN SOME WAYS--MORE THAN HUMAN! IT'S A LIVING ANDROID!
4


WAIT, JOHNNY! DON'T ATTACK IT YET! NOT TILL WE KNOW MORE ABOUT IT!
AWW, WHAT DO I HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT FROM A BIG HUNK LIKE THAT??
SUDDENLY, AS THE BLAZING TORCH FLAMES TOWARDS IT, THE ANDROID SPEWS FORTH A HURRICANE-INTENSITY BLAST OF WIND--
WHOOSH
YEOWW! IT'S LIKE FLYING INTO THE MOUTH OF A TORNADO! IT-IT'S BLOWING OUT MY FLAME!
WHOOOOOSH
STEP ASIDE, PLAYMATES! AS USUAL, I CAN SEE IT'S UP TO LITTLE OLD ME TO TAKE CARE OF THIS OVER-SIZED RAG DOLL!
HEY! NOW WHAT'S HAPPENIN' ??
I WAS AFRAID OF THAT, BEN! THE ANDROID HAS THE POWER OF MIMICRY BUILT INTO IT-- IT'S TURNING INTO--YOU!
BUT IT'S A STILL BIGGER, STRONGER VERSION OF THE THING! DUCK, BEN-- GET AWAY FROM IT!
WHAT DO YA THINK I'M TRYIN' TO DO, MISTER ??
THANKS, SUE, FOR HELPING ME PULL HIM OUT OF THE WAY!
LUCKILY THE ANDROID IS SLOW-MOVING! WE'VE GOT A FEW SECONDS TO THINK OF SOME WAY TO DEFEAT IT!
ALL OF YOU STAY BACK, NOW! THE THINKER CREATED HIM FROM MY NOTES-- IN A WAY, HE'S MY RESPONSIBILITY! AND I'LL FIND A WAY TO NULLIFY HIS POWER!
REED! I CAN'T LET YOU FACE THAT CREATURE ALONE! IF-IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO YOU-
IF I CAN'T STOP YOU, SUE, THEN AT LEAST TURN INVISIBLE-- IT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE!
18


I'LL TRY TO KEEP HIM IMMOBILE AS LONG AS I CAN!
IF I REMEMBER MY NOTES CORRECTLY, HIS MOTOR NERVE TERMINAL IS ON HIS RIGHT SIDE, UNDER HIS ARM! YOU'VE GOT TO PRESS IT, SUE-- YOU MUSTN'T MISS! C-CAN'T HOLD HIM MUCH LONGER!
YOU DID IT, SUE! YOUR SENSITIVE TOUCH KNOCKED OUT THE ANDROID!
LUCKY FOR US THAT SUE WAS HERE! MY FINGERS ARE TOO BLUNT, YOU COULDN'T FREE YOURS LONG ENOUGH, AND THE ANDROID WOULDA SEEN THE TORCH AND KICKED 'IM AWAY!
IT IS ONE MINUTE TO FOUR! I CALCULATED THAT YOU WOULD BE HERE AT THIS SECOND IF YOU DEFEATED THE ANDROID! SO FAR, MY DEDUCTIONS HAVE BEEN PERFECT!
THAT CHARACTER SEEMS TO THINK THIS IS ONE BIG GAME HE'S PLAYIN'!!
WE'VE GOT YOUR MEN TRAPPED BEHIND A WALL OF STEEL DOWNSTAIRS, AND NOW WE'RE GONNA PUT THE KIBOSH ON YOU, TOO!
DID YOU EXPECT ME TO BE UNPREPARED FOR YOUR FLAME?? THE CHEMICAL IN THIS GUN, WHICH I TOOK FROM MR. FANTASTIC'S CABINET, WILL DOUSE YOUR FLAME--FOREVER!
YOU CALL YOURSELF THE THINKER! HUH--YOU'RE NOT SO MUCH! ALL YOUR WEAPONS AND POWERS ARE STOLEN FROM MR. FANTASTIC!
FOOL! ONLY SOMEONE AS BRILLIANT AS I WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OUTSMART YOUR LEADER!! WHO DO YOU THINK IT WAS WHO ARRANGED FOR ALL OF YOU TO LEAVE NEW YORK?
IT WAS ME! I ARRANGED EVERYTHING DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL! AND NOW, AT LAST, I AM ARRANGING YOUR FINISH!
I HAVE A SEPARATE ANTI-MATTER SHELL ZEROED IN ON EACH OF YOU--AGAIN, THANKS TO MR. FANTASTIC WHO INVENTED THIS POTENT WEAPON!
AND SO, AT THIS SECOND, AT EXACTLY THE STROKE OF FOUR, JUST AS I HAD PLANNED, THE FANTASTIC FOUR WILL MEET THEIR--
MY GUN! THE SHELLS! WHA- WHAT HAS HAPPENED??
BZZZZ ZZZT!
19

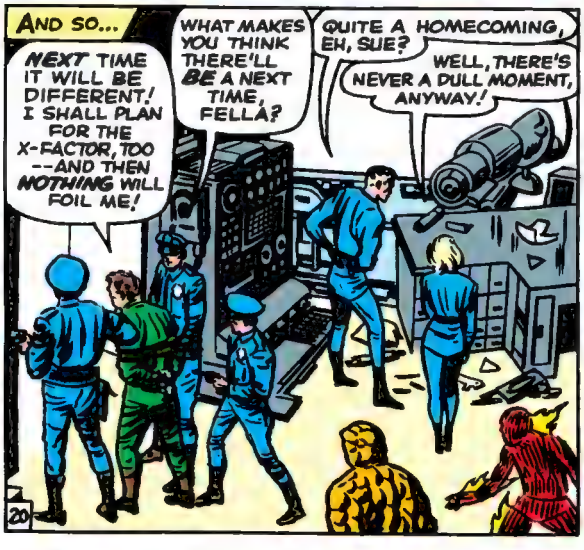
WE'LL TELL YA ALL ABOUT IT, LAUGHING BOY--AFTER I MOP UP THE PLACE WITH YA!
DON'T HURT HIM, BEN! HE'S POWERLESS NOW!
QUICK, JOHNNY, DESTROY THOSE DEADLY CYLINDERS!
I WAS HOPIN' YOU'D ASK!

HOW? HOW DID YOU DO IT?? HOW DID YOU BEAT ME?
AWW, WRITE 'IM A LETTER, REED! I'M ITCHIN' TO CLOBBER 'IM!
YOU OVERLOOKED ONE THING IN YOUR PLANS, THINKER! THERE IS ALWAYS AN X-FACTOR TO PREPARE FOR--THE UNEXPECTED!

NOT KNOWING WHAT WE'D FIND WHEN WE INVADED OUR BUILDING, I CONTACTED MR. LUMPKIN, OUR POSTMAN, AND TOLD HIM TO RING A SPECIAL DOWNSTAIRS BELL AT EXACTLY FOUR O'CLOCK!

I HAD PREVIOUSLY SET UP AN ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT BREAKER WHICH RENDERED ALL MY EQUIPMENT USELESS WHEN THAT BELL IS RUNG--AS A PRECAUTION AGAINST ANY ENEMY TAKING OVER MY LAB!

BAH! YOU TALKED SO MUCH THAT I GOT OVER MY ANGER!
THE X-FACTOR--THE UNEXPECTED! THE HUMAN ELEMENT! THE ONE THING I DIDN'T COUNT ON!
I SENT FOR THE POLICE, REED!


AND SO...
NEXT TIME IT WILL BE DIFFERENT! I SHALL PLAN FOR THE X-FACTOR, TOO --AND THEN NOTHING WILL FOIL ME!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THERE'LL BE A NEXT TIME, FELLA?
QUITE A HOMECOMING, EH, SUE?
WELL, THERE'S NEVER A DULL MOMENT, ANYWAY!
20

NOW HEAR THIS, KIDDIES! IT'S EXACTLY FOUR MINUTES AFTER FOUR--AND THE MENACE OF THE THINKER IS OVER!
AND WE'RE ALL TOGETHER AGAIN, AS WE SHOULD BE!
WAIT'LL I GET MY FIDDLE, SIS! I'LL PLAY "HEARTS AND FLOWERS"!
FOR THIS I GAVE UP A CAREER IN SHOW BIZ! I OUGHTTA HAVE MY HEAD EXAMINED!
THE END

THE FANTASTIC FOUR
PIN-UP Page
Sincerely,
Ben, Reed,
Sue, & Johnny
-A Stan & JACK

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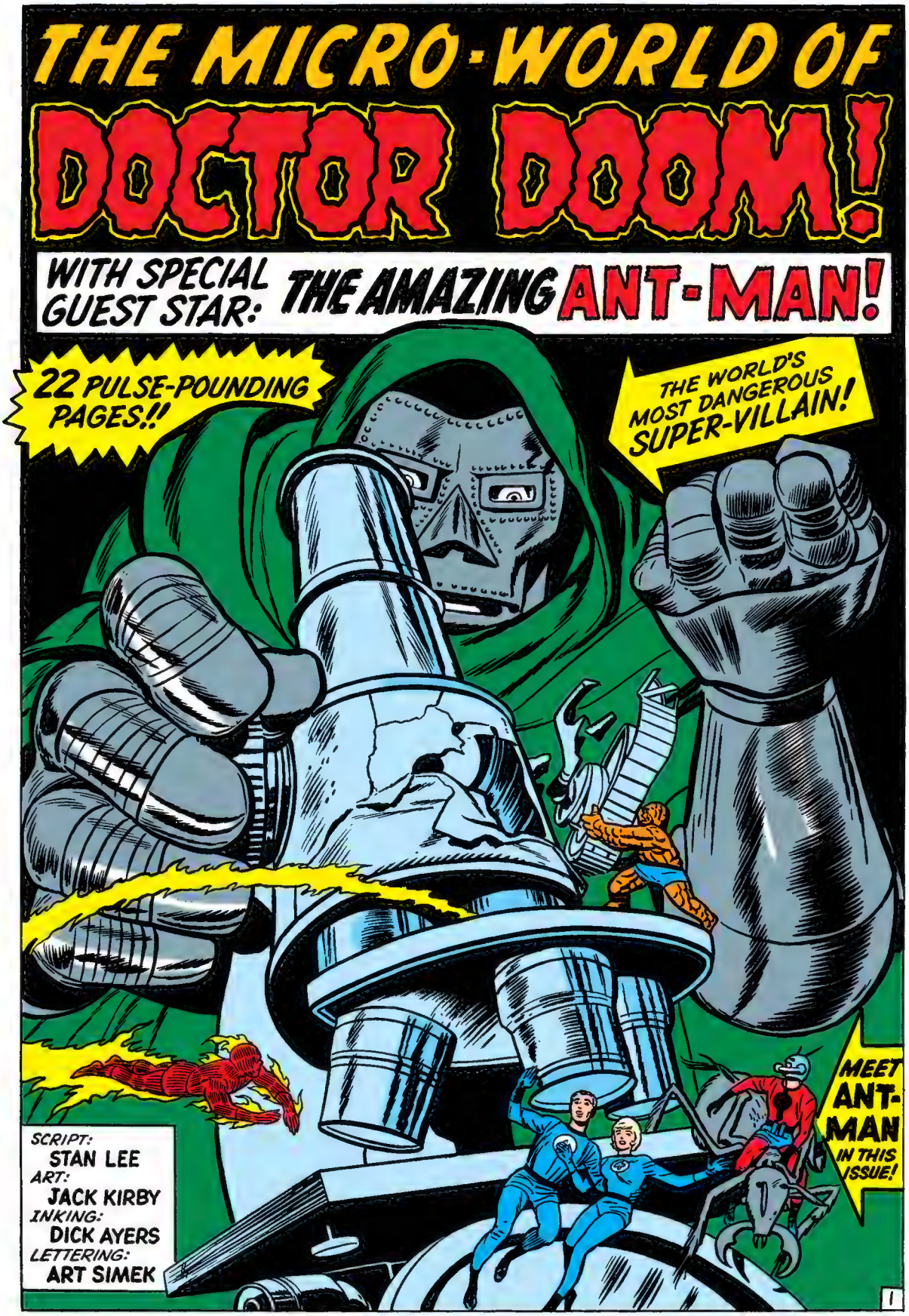

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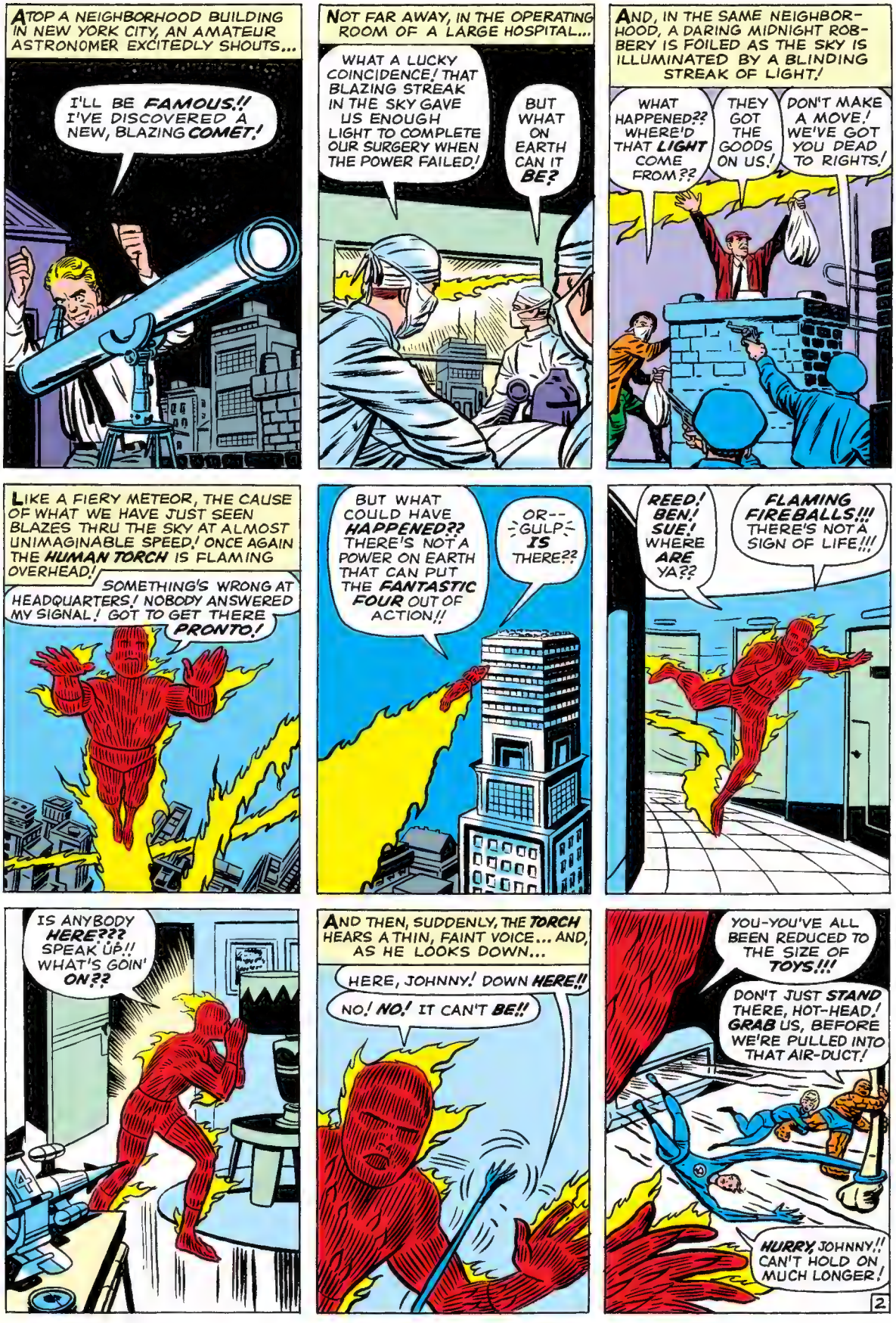
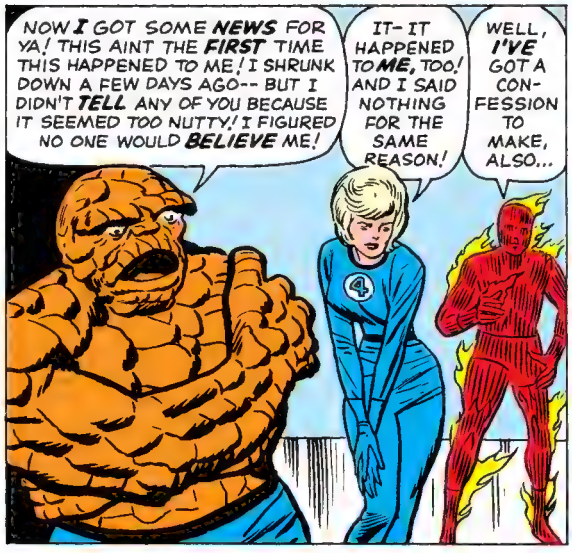
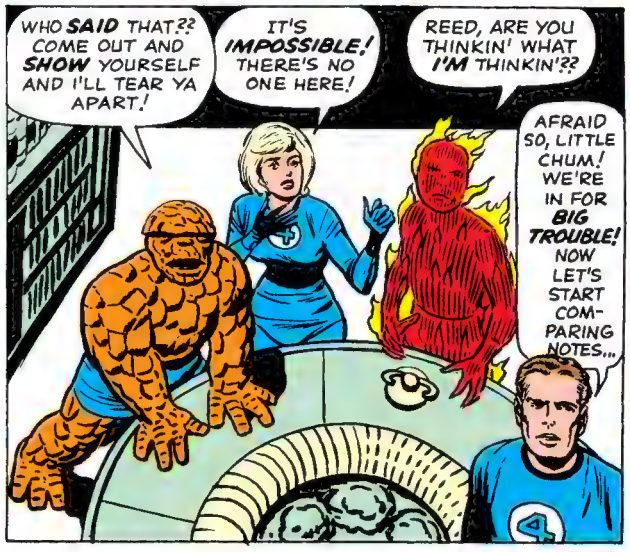

ATOP A NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING IN NEW YORK CITY, AN AMATEUR ASTRONOMER EXCITEDLY SHOUTS...
I'LL BE FAMOUS!! I'VE DISCOVERED A NEW, BLAZING COMET!
NOT FAR AWAY, IN THE OPERATING ROOM OF A LARGE HOSPITAL...
WHAT A LUCKY COINCIDENCE! THAT BLAZING STREAK IN THE SKY GAVE US ENOUGH LIGHT TO COMPLETE OUR SURGERY WHEN THE POWER FAILED!
BUT WHAT ON EARTH CAN IT BE?
AND, IN THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD, A DARING MIDNIGHT ROBBERY IS FOILED AS THE SKY IS ILLUMINATED BY A BLINDING STREAK OF LIGHT!
WHAT HAPPENED?? WHERE'D THAT LIGHT COME FROM??
THEY GOT THE GOODS ON US!
DON'T MAKE A MOVE! WE'VE GOT YOU DEAD TO RIGHTS!
LIKE A FIERY METEOR, THE CAUSE OF WHAT WE HAVE JUST SEEN BLAZES THRU THE SKY AT ALMOST UNIMAGINABLE SPEED! ONCE AGAIN THE HUMAN TORCH IS FLAMING OVERHEAD!
SOMETHING'S WRONG AT HEADQUARTERS! NOBODY ANSWERED MY SIGNAL! GOT TO GET THERE PRONTO!
BUT WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED?? THERE'S NOT A POWER ON EARTH THAT CAN PUT THE FANTASTIC FOUR OUT OF ACTION!!
OR--GULP--IS THERE??
REED! BEN! SUE! WHERE ARE YA??
FLAMING FIREBALLS!!! THERE'S NOT A SIGN OF LIFE!!!
IS ANYBODY HERE??? SPEAK UP!! WHAT'S GOIN' ON??
AND THEN, SUDDENLY, THE TORCH HEARS A THIN, FAINT VOICE... AND, AS HE LOOKS DOWN...
HERE, JOHNNY! DOWN HERE!!
NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!!
YOU-YOU'VE ALL BEEN REDUCED TO THE SIZE OF TOYS!!!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE, HOT-HEAD! GRAB US, BEFORE WE'RE PULLED INTO THAT AIR-DUCT!
HURRY, JOHNNY!! CAN'T HOLD ON MUCH LONGER!
2

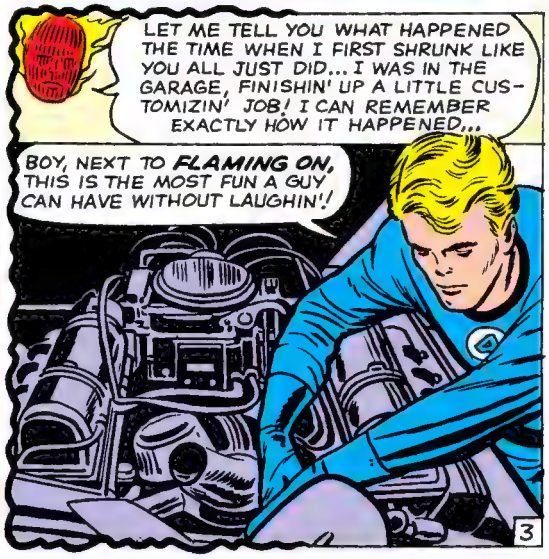
THERE! THAT'LL FIX IT! MY FLAME WELDED THE DUCT SHUT!
THANK HEAVENS!

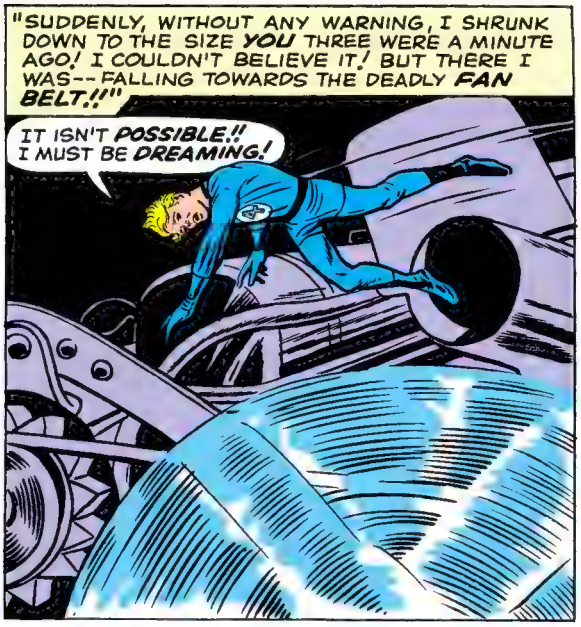
HEY! YOU-- YOU'RE GROWING BACK TO NORMAL SIZE AGAIN!! LET ME IN ON IT! WHAT'S THE PITCH???
I DON'T KNOW, KID! IT'S SOME POWER-- BEYOND OUR CONTROL!
WELL, BIG BRAIN, START DOPIN' IT OUT! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE MENTAL GIANT OF THIS COMBO!

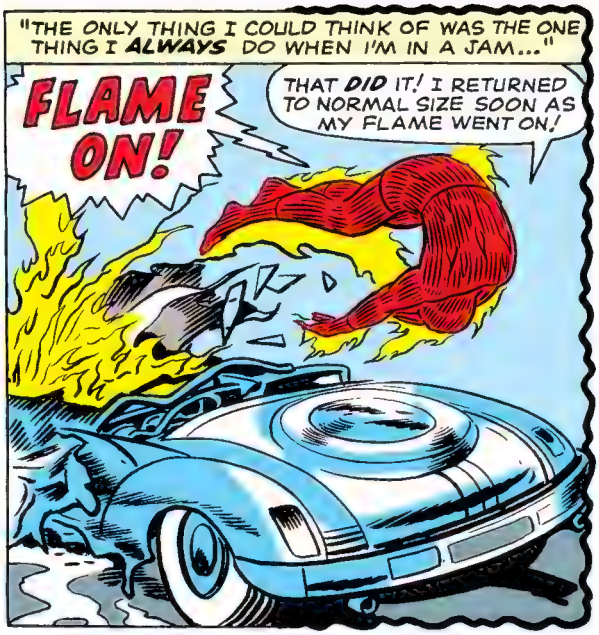

NOW I GOT SOME NEWS FOR YA! THIS AINT THE FIRST TIME THIS HAPPENED TO ME! I SHRUNK DOWN A FEW DAYS AGO-- BUT I DIDN'T TELL ANY OF YOU BECAUSE IT SEEMED TOO NUTTY! I FIGURED NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE ME!
IT- IT HAPPENED TO ME, TOO! AND I SAID NOTHING FOR THE SAME REASON!
WELL, I'VE GOT A CONFESSION TO MAKE, ALSO...

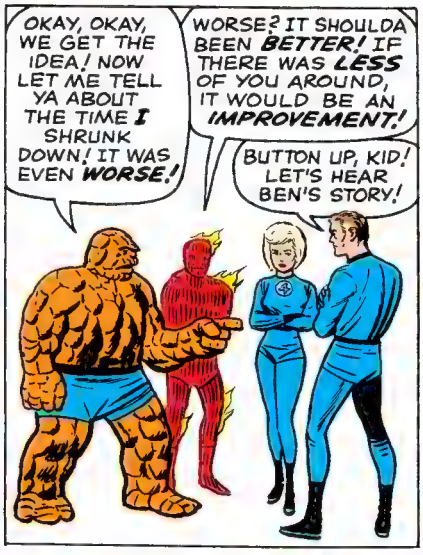
THIS IS INCREDIBLE!! IT'S HAPPENED TO ALL OF US BEFORE--SEPARATELY! BUT NONE OF US COULD REALLY BELIEVE OUR SENSES, AND... WAIT! WHAT'S THAT LAUGHTER???
HAH! YOU FOOLS! YOU ARE HELPLESS AS PUTTY BEFORE MY POWER! THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF WHAT I HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU!

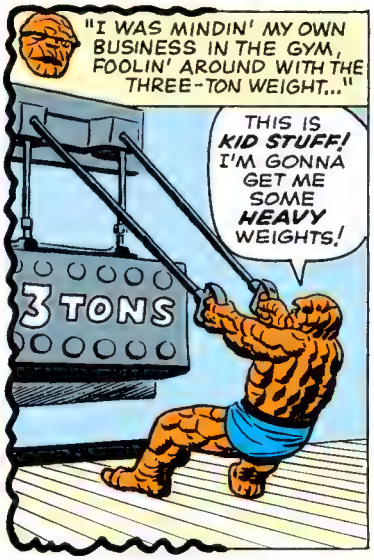

WHO SAID THAT?? COME OUT AND SHOW YOURSELF AND I'LL TEAR YA APART!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THERE'S NO ONE HERE!
REED, ARE YOU THINKIN' WHAT I'M THINKIN'??
AFRAID SO, LITTLE CHUM! WE'RE IN FOR BIG TROUBLE! NOW LET'S START COMPARING NOTES...


LET ME TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED THE TIME WHEN I FIRST SHRUNK LIKE YOU ALL JUST DID... I WAS IN THE GARAGE, FINISHIN' UP A LITTLE CUSTOMIZIN' JOB! I CAN REMEMBER EXACTLY HOW IT HAPPENED...
BOY, NEXT TO FLAMING ON, THIS IS THE MOST FUN A GUY CAN HAVE WITHOUT LAUGHIN'!

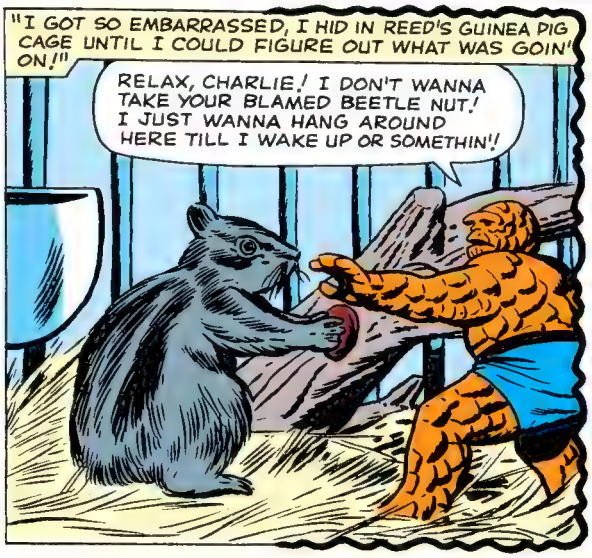

"SUDDENLY, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, I SHRUNK DOWN TO THE SIZE YOU THREE WERE A MINUTE AGO! I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT! BUT THERE I WAS--FALLING TOWARDS THE DEADLY FAN BELT!!"
IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!! I MUST BE DREAMING!

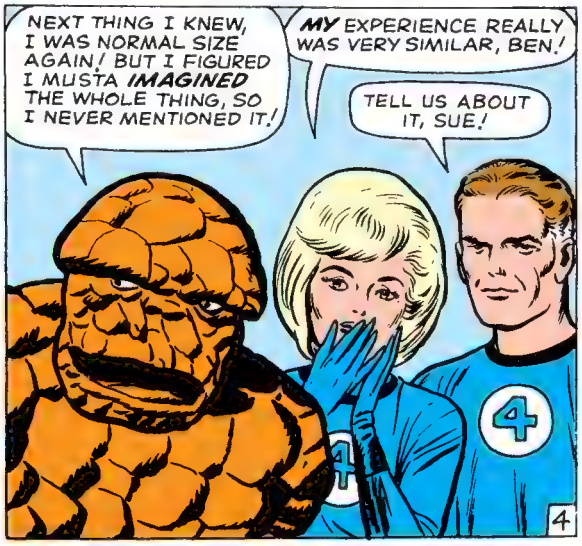

"THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF WAS THE ONE THING I ALWAYS DO WHEN I'M IN A JAM..."
FLAME ON!
THAT DID IT! I RETURNED TO NORMAL SIZE SOON AS MY FLAME WENT ON!

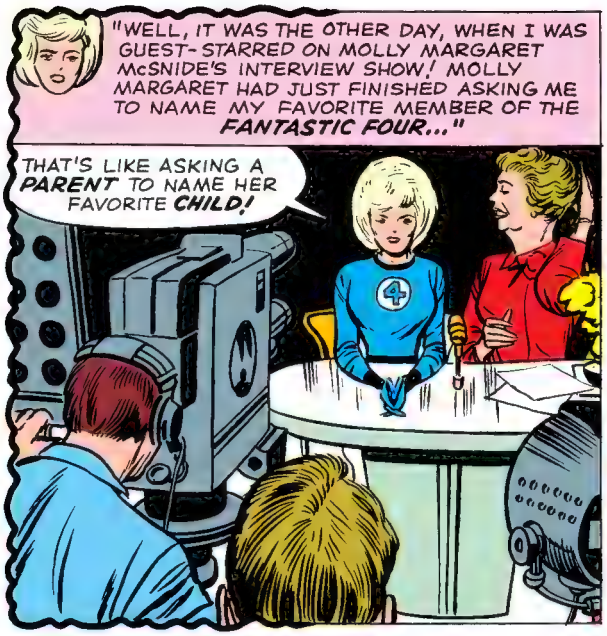

OKAY, OKAY, WE GET THE IDEA! NOW LET ME TELL YA ABOUT THE TIME I SHRUNK DOWN! IT WAS EVEN WORSE!
WORSE? IT SHOULDA BEEN BETTER! IF THERE WAS LESS OF YOU AROUND, IT WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT!
BUTTON UP, KID! LET'S HEAR BEN'S STORY!

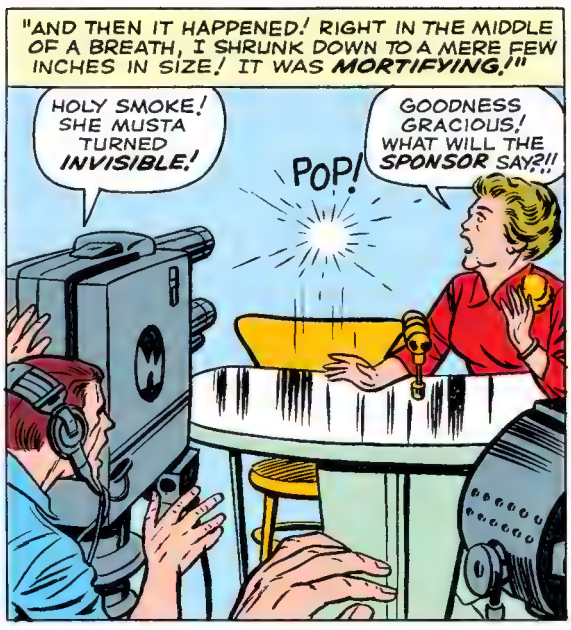

"I WAS MINDIN' MY OWN BUSINESS IN THE GYM, FOOLIN' AROUND WITH THE THREE-TON WEIGHT..."
THIS IS KID STUFF! I'M GONNA GET ME SOME HEAVY WEIGHTS!
3 TONS

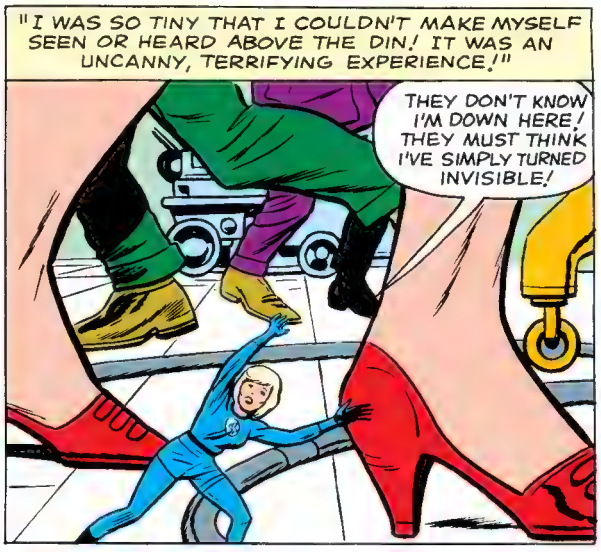
"--WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN I SHRUNK DOWN TO PINT SIZE, AND... POWIE!"
HEY! WHAT THE --??!!

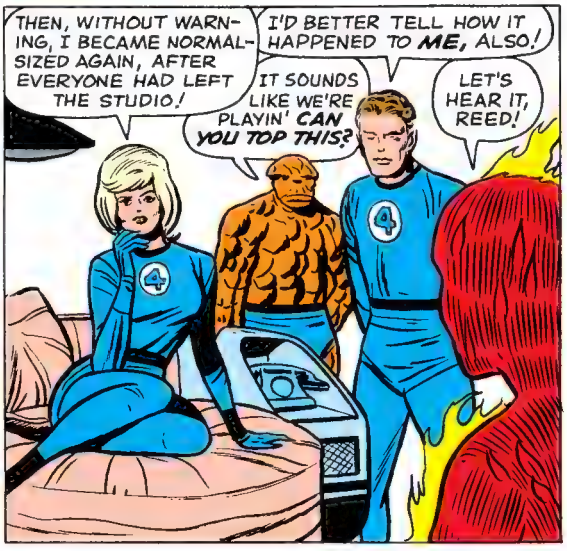

"I GOT SO EMBARRASSED, I HID IN REED'S GUINEA PIG CAGE UNTIL I COULD FIGURE OUT WHAT WAS GOIN' ON!"
RELAX, CHARLIE! I DON'T WANNA TAKE YOUR BLAMED BEETLE NUT! I JUST WANNA HANG AROUND HERE TILL I WAKE UP OR SOMETHIN'!

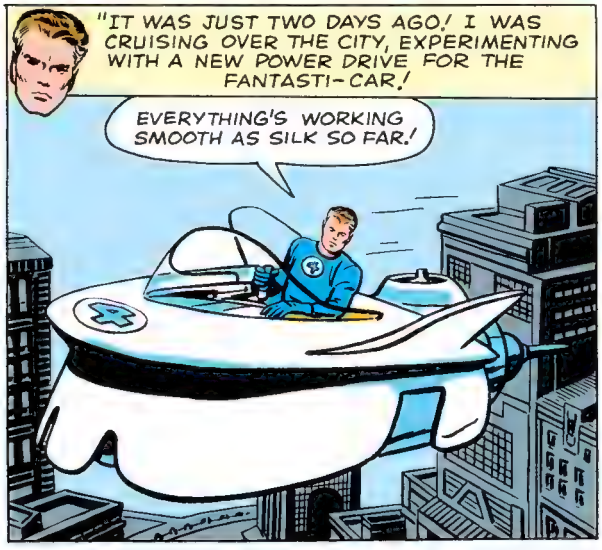

NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS NORMAL SIZE AGAIN! BUT I FIGURED I MUSTA IMAGINED THE WHOLE THING, SO I NEVER MENTIONED IT!
MY EXPERIENCE REALLY WAS VERY SIMILAR, BEN!
TELL US ABOUT IT, SUE!

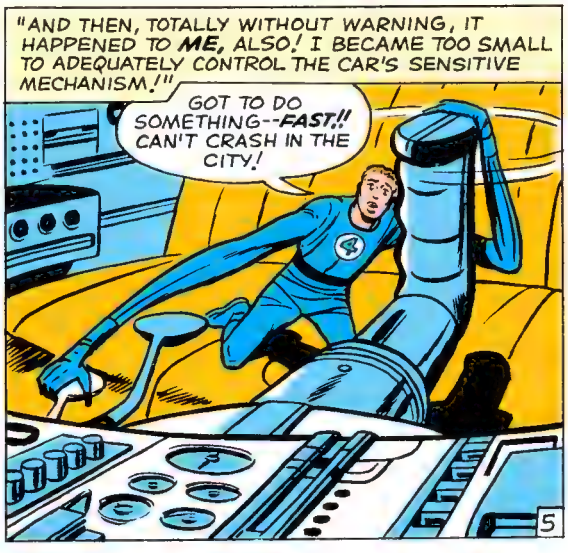

"WELL, IT WAS THE OTHER DAY, WHEN I WAS GUEST-STARRED ON MOLLY MARGARET McSNIDE'S INTERVIEW SHOW! MOLLY MARGARET HAD JUST FINISHED ASKING ME TO NAME MY FAVORITE MEMBER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR..."
THAT'S LIKE ASKING A PARENT TO NAME HER FAVORITE CHILD!

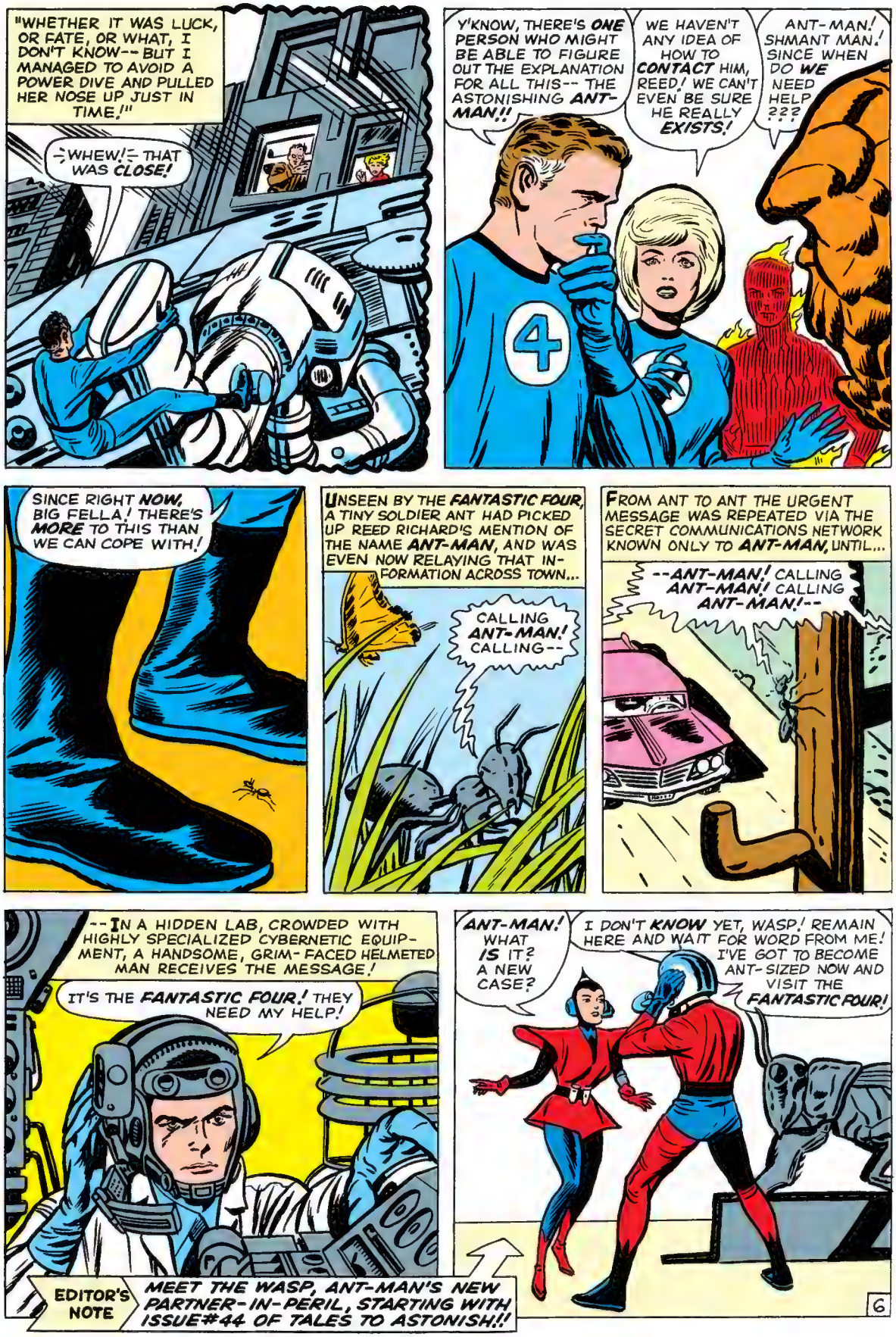

"AND THEN IT HAPPENED! RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A BREATH, I SHRUNK DOWN TO A MERE FEW INCHES IN SIZE! IT WAS MORTIFYING!"
HOLY SMOKE! SHE MUSTA TURNED INVISIBLE!
POP!
GOODNESS GRACIOUS, WHAT WILL THE SPONSOR SAY?!!

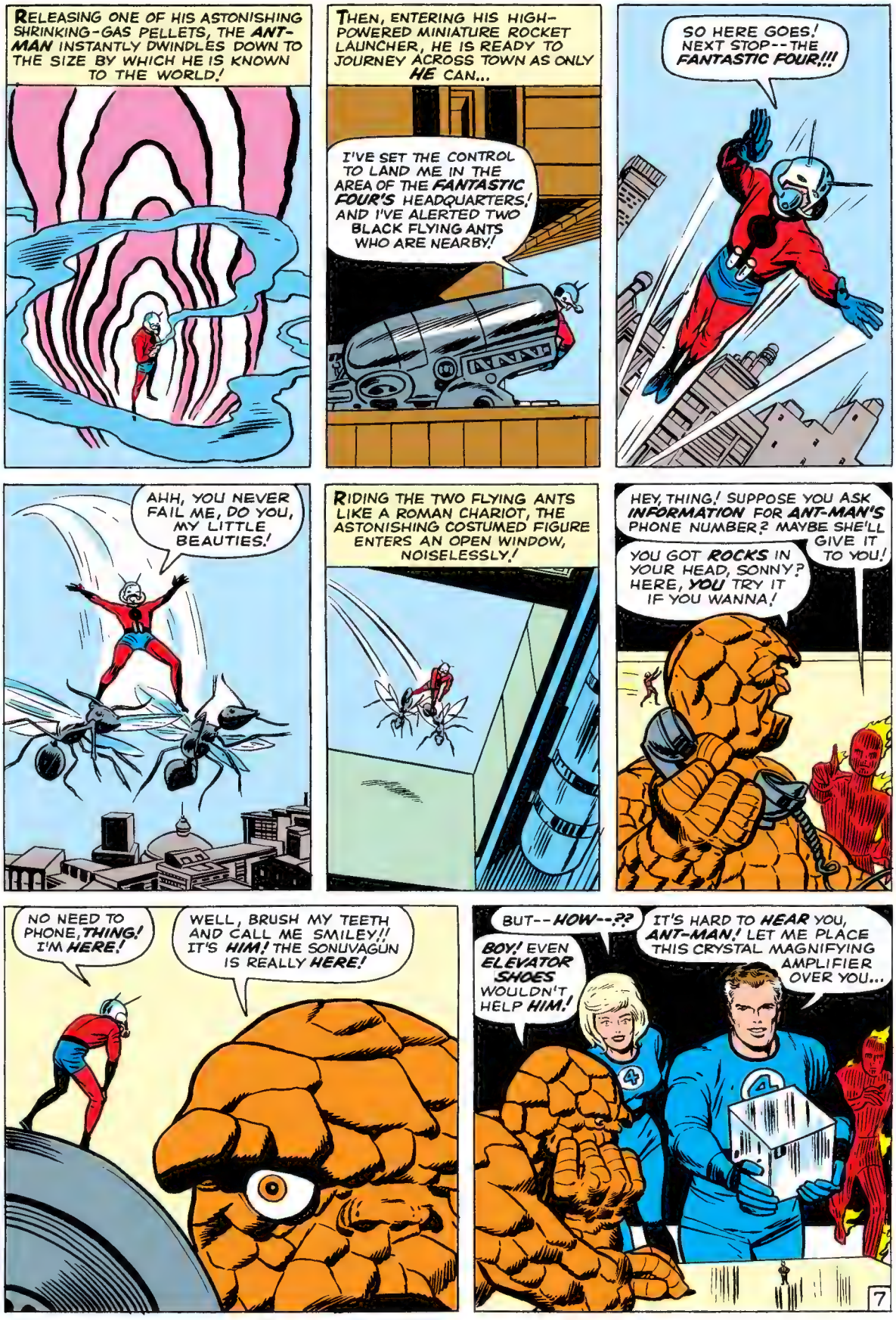

"I WAS SO TINY THAT I COULDN'T MAKE MYSELF SEEN OR HEARD ABOVE THE DIN! IT WAS AN UNCANNY, TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE!"
THEY DON'T KNOW I'M DOWN HERE! THEY MUST THINK I'VE SIMPLY TURNED INVISIBLE!

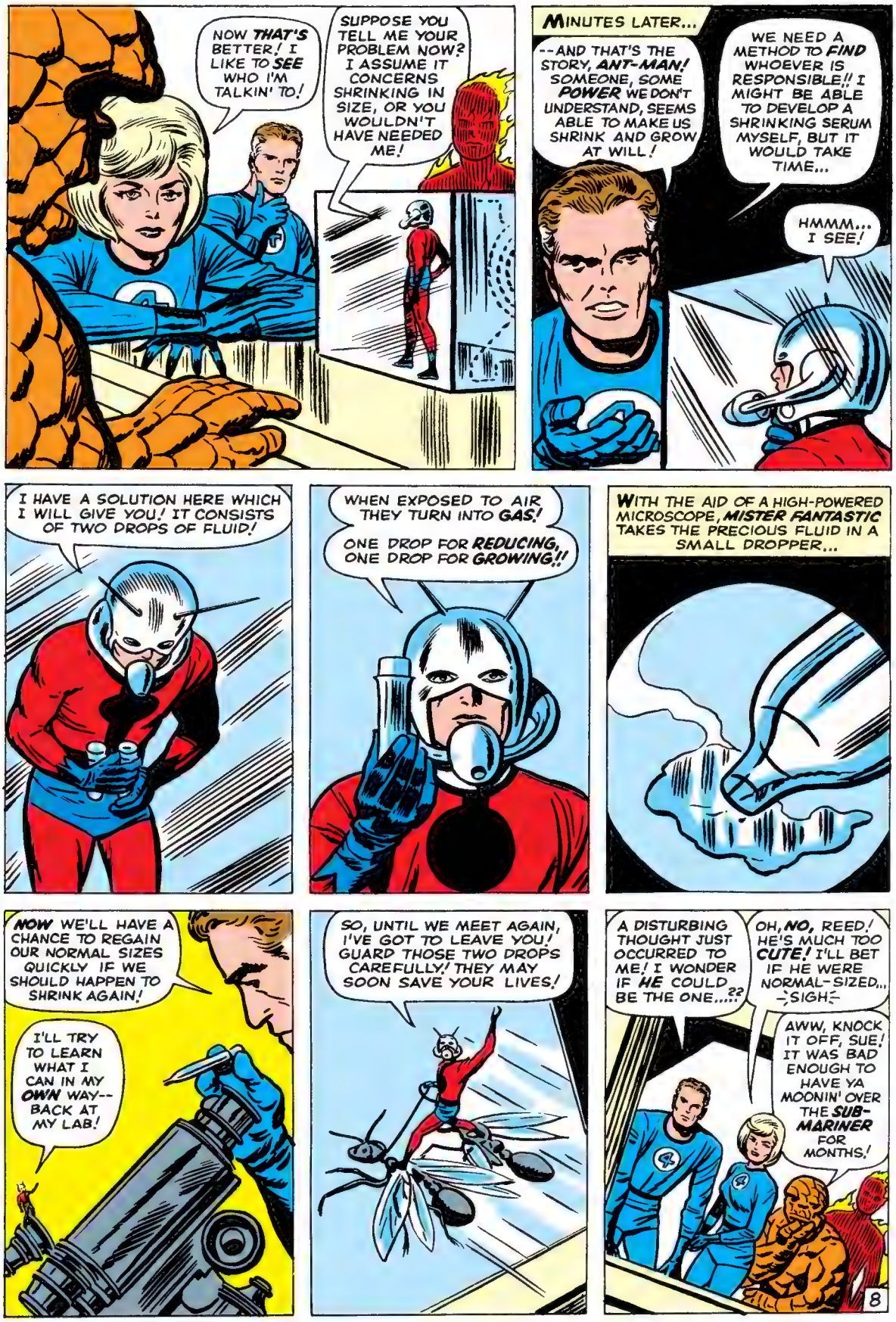

THEN, WITHOUT WARNING, I BECAME NORMAL-SIZED AGAIN, AFTER EVERYONE HAD LEFT THE STUDIO!
I'D BETTER TELL HOW IT HAPPENED TO ME, ALSO!
IT SOUNDS LIKE WE'RE PLAYIN' CAN YOU TOP THIS?
LET'S HEAR IT, REED!


"IT WAS JUST TWO DAYS AGO! I WAS CRUISING OVER THE CITY, EXPERIMENTING WITH A NEW POWER DRIVE FOR THE FANTASTI-CAR!
EVERYTHING'S WORKING SMOOTH AS SILK SO FAR!

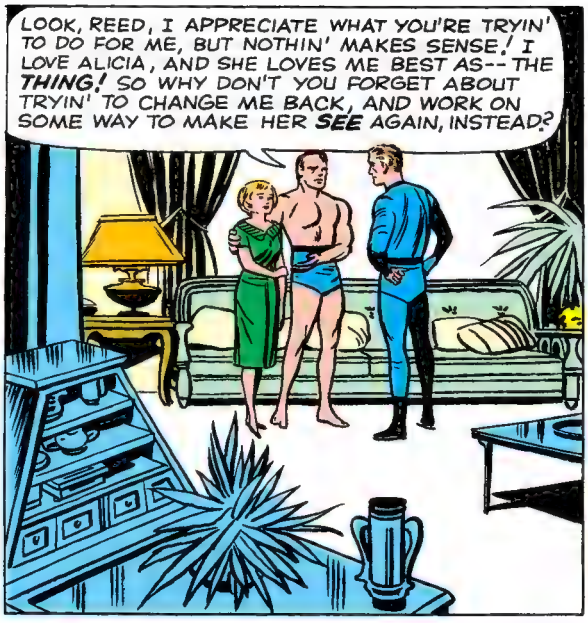

"AND THEN, TOTALLY WITHOUT WARNING, IT HAPPENED TO ME, ALSO! I BECAME TOO SMALL TO ADEQUATELY CONTROL THE CAR'S SENSITIVE MECHANISM!"
GOT TO DO SOMETHING--FAST!! CAN'T CRASH IN THE CITY!


"WHETHER IT WAS LUCK, OR FATE, OR WHAT, I DON'T KNOW-- BUT I MANAGED TO AVOID A POWER DIVE AND PULLED HER NOSE UP JUST IN TIME!"
-WHEW!- THAT WAS CLOSE!
Y'KNOW, THERE'S ONE PERSON WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT THE EXPLANATION FOR ALL THIS-- THE ASTONISHING ANT-MAN!!
WE HAVEN'T ANY IDEA OF HOW TO CONTACT HIM, REED! WE CAN'T EVEN BE SURE HE REALLY EXISTS!
ANT-MAN! SHMANT MAN! SINCE WHEN DO WE NEED HELP ???
SINCE RIGHT NOW, BIG FELLA! THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN WE CAN COPE WITH!
UNSEEN BY THE FANTASTIC FOUR, A TINY SOLDIER ANT HAD PICKED UP REED RICHARD'S MENTION OF THE NAME ANT-MAN, AND WAS EVEN NOW RELAYING THAT INFORMATION ACROSS TOWN...
CALLING ANT-MAN! CALLING--
FROM ANT TO ANT THE URGENT MESSAGE WAS REPEATED VIA THE SECRET COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK KNOWN ONLY TO ANT-MAN, UNTIL...
--ANT-MAN! CALLING ANT-MAN! CALLING ANT-MAN!--
--IN A HIDDEN LAB, CROWDED WITH HIGHLY SPECIALIZED CYBERNETIC EQUIPMENT, A HANDSOME, GRIM-FACED HELMETED MAN RECEIVES THE MESSAGE!
IT'S THE FANTASTIC FOUR! THEY NEED MY HELP!
ANT-MAN! WHAT IS IT? A NEW CASE?
I DON'T KNOW YET, WASP! REMAIN HERE AND WAIT FOR WORD FROM ME! I'VE GOT TO BECOME ANT-SIZED NOW AND VISIT THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
EDITOR'S NOTE
MEET THE WASP, ANT-MAN'S NEW PARTNER-IN-PERIL, STARTING WITH ISSUE#44 OF TALES TO ASTONISH!!
6

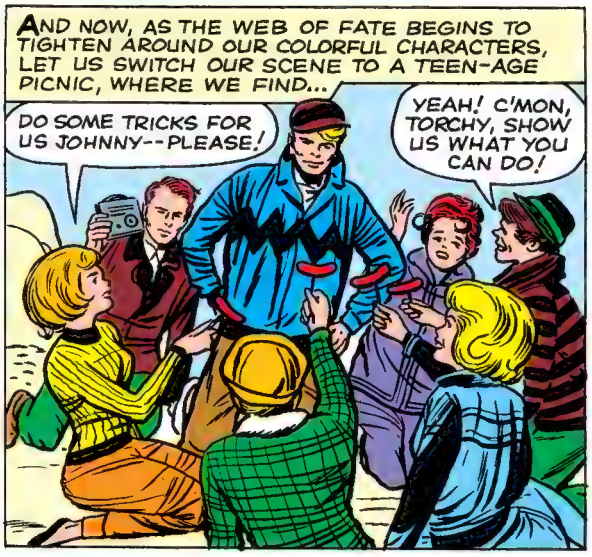

RELEASING ONE OF HIS ASTONISHING SHRINKING-GAS PELLETS, THE ANT-MAN INSTANTLY DWINDLES DOWN TO THE SIZE BY WHICH HE IS KNOWN TO THE WORLD!
THEN, ENTERING HIS HIGH-POWERED MINIATURE ROCKET LAUNCHER, HE IS READY TO JOURNEY ACROSS TOWN AS ONLY HE CAN...
I'VE SET THE CONTROL TO LAND ME IN THE AREA OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S HEADQUARTERS! AND I'VE ALERTED TWO BLACK FLYING ANTS WHO ARE NEARBY!
SO HERE GOES! NEXT STOP--THE FANTASTIC FOUR!!!
AHH, YOU NEVER FAIL ME, DO YOU, MY LITTLE BEAUTIES!
RIDING THE TWO FLYING ANTS LIKE A ROMAN CHARIOT, THE ASTONISHING COSTUMED FIGURE ENTERS AN OPEN WINDOW, NOISELESSLY!
HEY, THING! SUPPOSE YOU ASK INFORMATION FOR ANT-MAN'S PHONE NUMBER? MAYBE SHE'LL GIVE IT TO YOU!
YOU GOT ROCKS IN YOUR HEAD, SONNY? HERE, YOU TRY IT IF YOU WANNA!
NO NEED TO PHONE, THING! I'M HERE!
WELL, BRUSH MY TEETH AND CALL ME SMILEY!! IT'S HIM! THE SONUVAGUN IS REALLY HERE!
BUT--HOW--??
BOY! EVEN ELEVATOR SHOES WOULDN'T HELP HIM!
IT'S HARD TO HEAR YOU, ANT-MAN! LET ME PLACE THIS CRYSTAL MAGNIFYING AMPLIFIER OVER YOU...
7

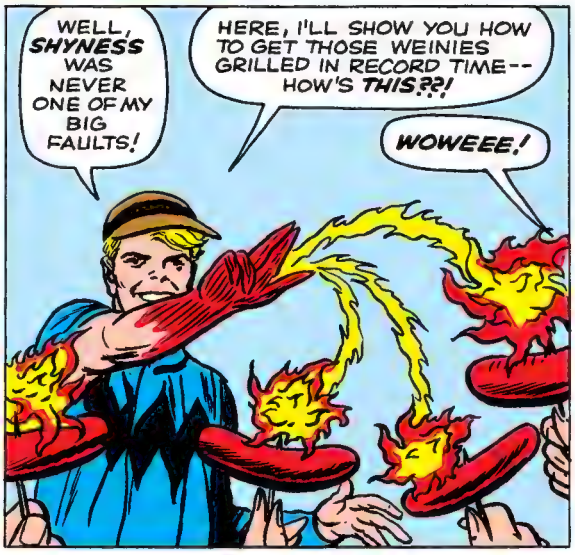

NOW THAT'S BETTER! I LIKE TO SEE WHO I'M TALKIN' TO!
SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME YOUR PROBLEM NOW? I ASSUME IT CONCERNS SHRINKING IN SIZE, OR YOU WOULDN'T HAVE NEEDED ME!
MINUTES LATER...
--AND THAT'S THE STORY, ANT-MAN! SOMEONE, SOME POWER WE DON'T UNDERSTAND, SEEMS ABLE TO MAKE US SHRINK AND GROW AT WILL!
WE NEED A METHOD TO FIND WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE!! I MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEVELOP A SHRINKING SERUM MYSELF, BUT IT WOULD TAKE TIME...
HMMM... I SEE!
I HAVE A SOLUTION HERE WHICH I WILL GIVE YOU! IT CONSISTS OF TWO DROPS OF FLUID!
WHEN EXPOSED TO AIR THEY TURN INTO GAS!
ONE DROP FOR REDUCING, ONE DROP FOR GROWING!!
WITH THE AID OF A HIGH-POWERED MICROSCOPE, MISTER FANTASTIC TAKES THE PRECIOUS FLUID IN A SMALL DROPPER...
NOW WE'LL HAVE A CHANCE TO REGAIN OUR NORMAL SIZES QUICKLY IF WE SHOULD HAPPEN TO SHRINK AGAIN!
I'LL TRY TO LEARN WHAT I CAN IN MY OWN WAY-- BACK AT MY LAB!
SO, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, I'VE GOT TO LEAVE YOU! GUARD THOSE TWO DROPS CAREFULLY! THEY MAY SOON SAVE YOUR LIVES!
A DISTURBING THOUGHT JUST OCCURRED TO ME! I WONDER IF HE COULD BE THE ONE.....??
OH, NO, REED! HE'S MUCH TOO CUTE! I'LL BET IF HE WERE NORMAL-SIZED... -SIGH-
AWW, KNOCK IT OFF, SUE! IT WAS BAD ENOUGH TO HAVE YA MOONIN' OVER THE SUB-MARINER FOR MONTHS!

THE NEXT DAY, AT THE APARTMENT OF BEN GRIMM'S BLIND FRIEND, ALICIA...
HELLO, ALICIA DEAR! BEN, I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU! I'VE GOT SOMETHING--
CAN'T IT WAIT, PAL? I'M HELPIN' ALICIA WITH HER SPRING CLEANIN'...
I DON'T THINK YOU'LL WANT TO WAIT WITH THIS! I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A NEW SERUM TO MAKE YOU REVERT TO YOUR NORMAL FORM AGAIN, AND I WANT TO TRY OUT THE FIRST PHASE OF IT!
AWW, I'M SICK AND TIRED OF BEING A GUINEA PIG FOR YOU AND YOUR EXPERIMENTS! I AINT GONNA WASTE ANY MORE--HEY! STOP! CUT IT OUT! GLUBBB...
PTUI! IT TASTES LIKE DISH WATER! CAN'T YA EVEN USE SOME CHOCOLATE FLAVOR OR SOMETHIN'!
NEVER MIND THE TASTE, OLD FRIEND! LET'S WATCH THE RESULTS!
HEY! IT--IT'S STARTIN' TO BURN! I--I FEEL LIKE I'M CHOKIN'! WHAT DID YOU DO, POISON ME??
NO, YOU BIG APE! THAT MEANS IT'S WORKING!
WAIT TILL YOU SEE YOURSELF, BEN!! IT WON'T LAST, BECAUSE THIS IS JUST A PRELIMINARY FORMULA, BUT IT MEANS I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK!
I-I DON'T FEEL LIKE THE THING ANY MORE!
LOOK OUT! CAN'T HOLD THE PIANO UP ANY MORE!! GANGWAY!
IT'S MY FAULT, BEN! I SHOULD HAVE REMINDED YOU TO PUT IT DOWN BEFORE I GAVE YOU THE FORMULA! BUT I WAS SO ANXIOUS...
BONNNG
OH, BEN! MY DARLING! ARE YOU HURT? WHY DO YOU FEEL SO DIFFERENT?? I--I LOVE YOU SO THAT I DON'T WANT YOU TO CHANGE! I DON'T EVER WANT ANYTHING TO CHANGE YOU!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SUE BABY! I'M OKAY! AND NOTHIN'S EVER GONNA CHANGE FOR US! YOU CAN COUNT ON THAT, HONEY!
9

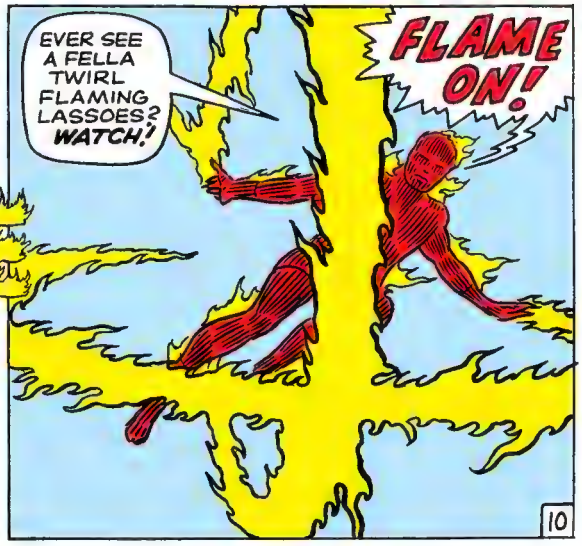

LOOK, REED, I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'RE TRYIN' TO DO FOR ME, BUT NOTHIN' MAKES SENSE! I LOVE ALICIA, AND SHE LOVES ME BEST AS--THE THING! SO WHY DON'T YOU FORGET ABOUT TRYIN' TO CHANGE ME BACK, AND WORK ON SOME WAY TO MAKE HER SEE AGAIN, INSTEAD?

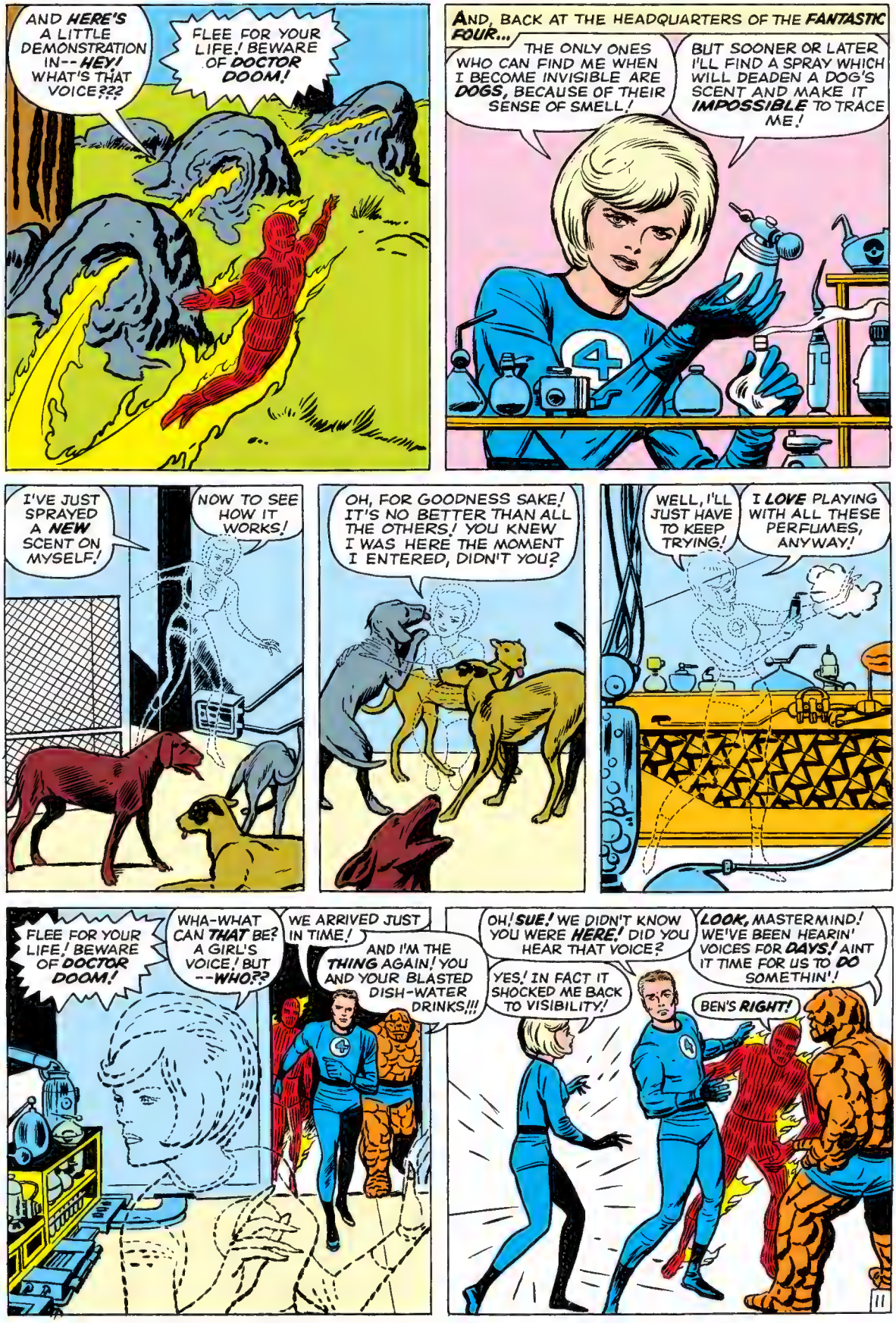
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, BEN! I'LL--WAIT! LISTEN--WHAT'S THAT???
FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES! BEWARE OF DOCTOR DOOM! HE'S TRYING TO--- OHHH!! HELP!
A STRANGE GIRL'S VOICE! BUT--FROM SO FAR AWAY! SO FAINT!
4


AND NOW, AS THE WEB OF FATE BEGINS TO TIGHTEN AROUND OUR COLORFUL CHARACTERS, LET US SWITCH OUR SCENE TO A TEEN-AGE PICNIC, WHERE WE FIND...
DO SOME TRICKS FOR US JOHNNY--PLEASE!
YEAH! C'MON, TORCHY, SHOW US WHAT YOU CAN DO!


WELL, SHYNESS WAS NEVER ONE OF MY BIG FAULTS!
HERE, I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO GET THOSE WEINIES GRILLED IN RECORD TIME--HOW'S THIS??!
WOWEEE!

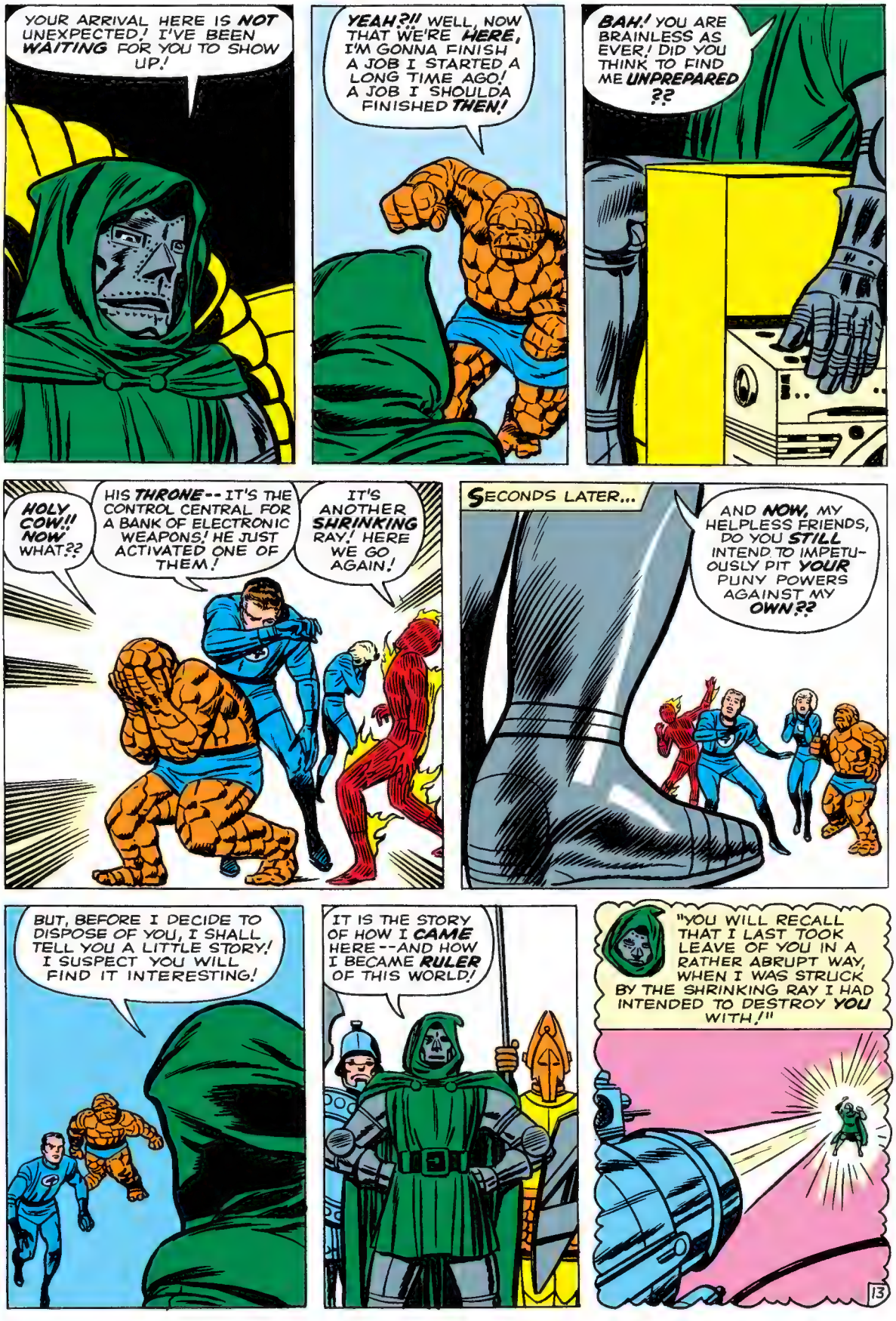
AND HERE'S A LITTLE STUNT I PLAN TO PERFORM AT THE NEXT BIG GAME!
GO GLENVILLE HIGH

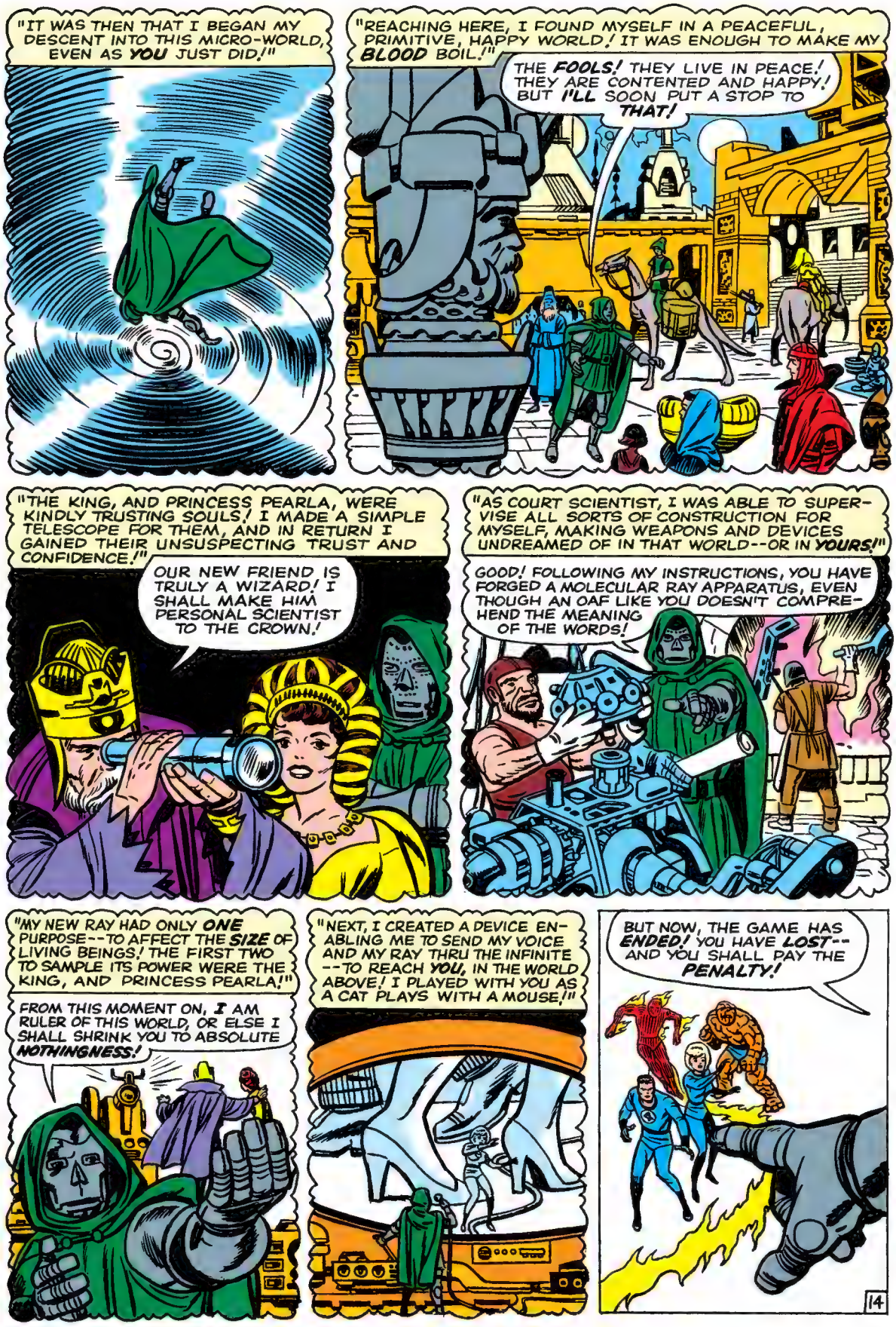

EVER SEE A FELLA TWIRL FLAMING LASSOES? WATCH!
FLAME ON!

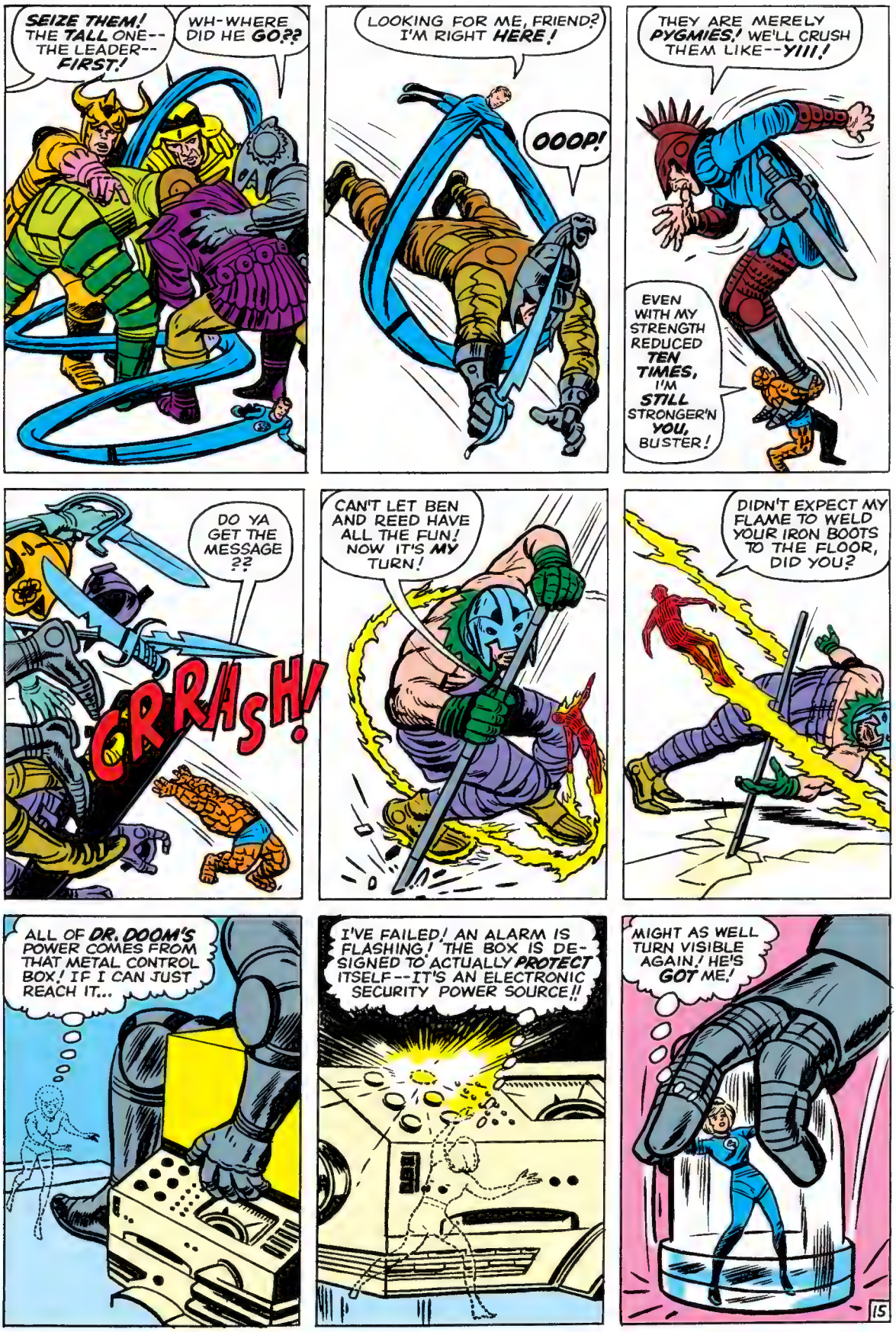

AND HERE'S A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION IN-- HEY! WHAT'S THAT VOICE???
FLEE FOR YOUR LIFE! BEWARE OF DOCTOR DOOM!
AND, BACK AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR...
THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN FIND ME WHEN I BECOME INVISIBLE ARE DOGS, BECAUSE OF THEIR SENSE OF SMELL!
BUT SOONER OR LATER I'LL FIND A SPRAY WHICH WILL DEADEN A DOG'S SCENT AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO TRACE ME!
I'VE JUST SPRAYED A NEW SCENT ON MYSELF!
NOW TO SEE HOW IT WORKS!
OH, FOR GOODNESS SAKE! IT'S NO BETTER THAN ALL THE OTHERS! YOU KNEW I WAS HERE THE MOMENT I ENTERED, DIDN'T YOU?
WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP TRYING!
I LOVE PLAYING WITH ALL THESE PERFUMES, ANYWAY!
FLEE FOR YOUR LIFE! BEWARE OF DOCTOR DOOM!
WHA-WHAT CAN THAT BE? A GIRL'S VOICE! BUT --WHO??
WE ARRIVED JUST IN TIME!
AND I'M THE THING AGAIN! YOU AND YOUR BLASTED DISH-WATER DRINKS!!!
OH! SUE! WE DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE HERE! DID YOU HEAR THAT VOICE?
YES! IN FACT IT SHOCKED ME BACK TO VISIBILITY!
LOOK, MASTERMIND! WE'VE BEEN HEARIN' VOICES FOR DAYS! AINT IT TIME FOR US TO DO SOMETHIN'!
BEN'S RIGHT!
11

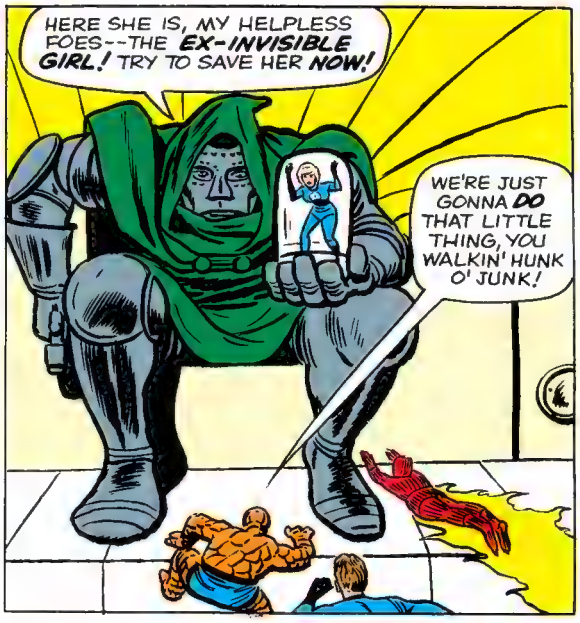
HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR--SOMEONE HAS BEEN CAUSING US TO SHRINK IN SIZE, THEN RETURN TO NORMAL! THEN, SOME MYSTERIOUS GIRL HAS BEEN WARNING US OF DOCTOR DOOM! IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE--UNLESS, BY SOME MIRACLE, HE IS STILL ALIVE!
AWW, HOW COULD HE BE?
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT...
THE LAST WE SAW OF DR. DOOM, HE WAS SHRINKING INTO NOTHINGNESS!* WELL, WE'RE GOING AFTER HIM! I'VE PORTIONED THE ANT-MAN'S FORMULA INTO FOUR UNITS--SO LET'S GO!
THAT'S WHAT I LIKE--ACTION!
SO FAST DOES THE COLORFUL QUARTET BEGIN TO SHRINK, THAT IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THEY ARE PLUNGING INTO THE VOTEX OF A MADLY SPINNING WHIRLPOOL!
WE'RE SHRINKING TOO FAST! QUICK--TAKE THE ENLARGING FORMULA, TO SLOW IT DOWN!!
GOTCHA, BOSS MAN!
AND FINALLY, THE SPINNING SLOWS DOWN--THE VERTIGO STOPS, AND THE WORLD SEEMS TO TAKE SHAPE AROUND THEM...
WE'RE IN SOME SORT OF MICRO-WORLD--A WORLD WHICH MIGHT FIT ON THE HEAD OF A PIN!
INDEED YOU ARE, MY DEAR! YOU ARE IN THE MICRO-WORLD OF DOCTOR DOOM!!!
WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN THE THREE OF YOU INTO!??
YOU WERE RIGHT! HE IS ALIVE!

*NOTE: THE COMPLETE STORY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S LAST ENCOUNTER WITH DR. DOOM WAS TOLD IN FANTASTIC FOUR #10, SEPT.

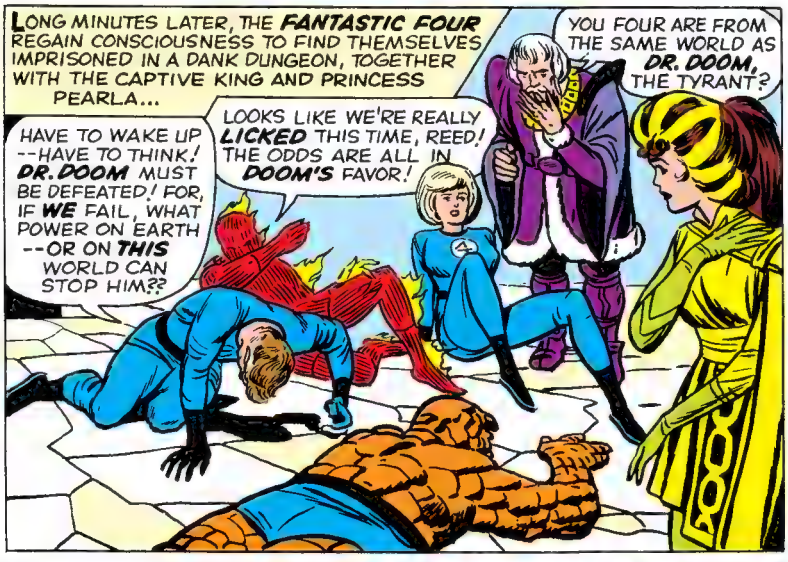

YOUR ARRIVAL HERE IS NOT UNEXPECTED! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO SHOW UP!
YEAH?!! WELL, NOW THAT WE'RE HERE, I'M GONNA FINISH A JOB I STARTED A LONG TIME AGO! A JOB I SHOULDA FINISHED THEN!
BAH! YOU ARE BRAINLESS AS EVER! DID YOU THINK TO FIND ME UNPREPARED ??
HOLY COW!! NOW WHAT??
HIS THRONE -- IT'S THE CONTROL CENTRAL FOR A BANK OF ELECTRONIC WEAPONS! HE JUST ACTIVATED ONE OF THEM!
IT'S ANOTHER SHRINKING RAY! HERE WE GO AGAIN!
SECONDS LATER...
AND NOW, MY HELPLESS FRIENDS, DO YOU STILL INTEND TO IMPETUOUSLY PIT YOUR PUNY POWERS AGAINST MY OWN??
BUT, BEFORE I DECIDE TO DISPOSE OF YOU, I SHALL TELL YOU A LITTLE STORY! I SUSPECT YOU WILL FIND IT INTERESTING!
IT IS THE STORY OF HOW I CAME HERE -- AND HOW I BECAME RULER OF THIS WORLD!
"YOU WILL RECALL THAT I LAST TOOK LEAVE OF YOU IN A RATHER ABRUPT WAY, WHEN I WAS STRUCK BY THE SHRINKING RAY I HAD INTENDED TO DESTROY YOU WITH!"
13


"IT WAS THEN THAT I BEGAN MY DESCENT INTO THIS MICRO-WORLD, EVEN AS YOU JUST DID!"
"REACHING HERE, I FOUND MYSELF IN A PEACEFUL, PRIMITIVE, HAPPY WORLD! IT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE MY BLOOD BOIL!"
THE FOOLS! THEY LIVE IN PEACE! THEY ARE CONTENTED AND HAPPY! BUT I'LL SOON PUT A STOP TO THAT!
"THE KING, AND PRINCESS PEARLA, WERE KINDLY TRUSTING SOULS! I MADE A SIMPLE TELESCOPE FOR THEM, AND IN RETURN I GAINED THEIR UNSUSPECTING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE!"
OUR NEW FRIEND IS TRULY A WIZARD! I SHALL MAKE HIM PERSONAL SCIENTIST TO THE CROWN!
"AS COURT SCIENTIST, I WAS ABLE TO SUPERVISE ALL SORTS OF CONSTRUCTION FOR MYSELF, MAKING WEAPONS AND DEVICES UNDREAMED OF IN THAT WORLD--OR IN YOURS!"
GOOD! FOLLOWING MY INSTRUCTIONS, YOU HAVE FORGED A MOLECULAR RAY APPARATUS, EVEN THOUGH AN OAF LIKE YOU DOESN'T COMPREHEND THE MEANING OF THE WORDS!
"MY NEW RAY HAD ONLY ONE PURPOSE--TO AFFECT THE SIZE OF LIVING BEINGS! THE FIRST TWO TO SAMPLE ITS POWER WERE THE KING, AND PRINCESS PEARLA!"
FROM THIS MOMENT ON, I AM RULER OF THIS WORLD, OR ELSE I SHALL SHRINK YOU TO ABSOLUTE NOTHINGNESS!
"NEXT, I CREATED A DEVICE ENABLING ME TO SEND MY VOICE AND MY RAY THRU THE INFINITE --TO REACH YOU, IN THE WORLD ABOVE! I PLAYED WITH YOU AS A CAT PLAYS WITH A MOUSE!"
BUT NOW, THE GAME HAS ENDED! YOU HAVE LOST-- AND YOU SHALL PAY THE PENALTY!
14

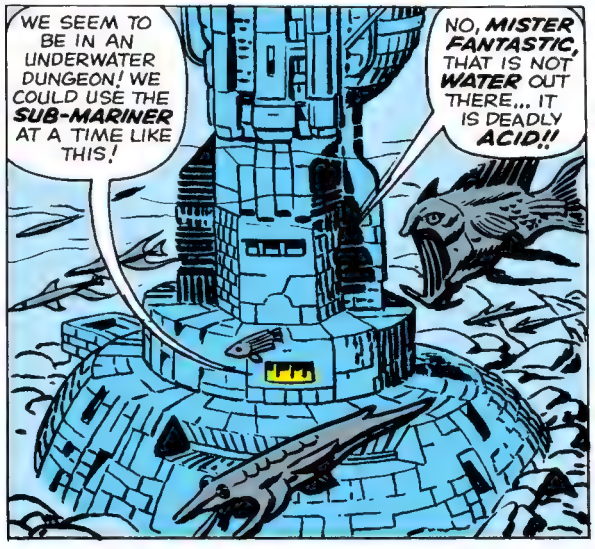

SEIZE THEM! THE TALL ONE--THE LEADER--FIRST!
WH-WHERE DID HE GO??
LOOKING FOR ME, FRIEND? I'M RIGHT HERE!
OOOP!
THEY ARE MERELY PYGMIES! WE'LL CRUSH THEM LIKE--YIII!
EVEN WITH MY STRENGTH REDUCED TEN TIMES, I'M STILL STRONGER'N YOU, BUSTER!
DO YA GET THE MESSAGE ??
CRRASH!
CAN'T LET BEN AND REED HAVE ALL THE FUN! NOW IT'S MY TURN!
DIDN'T EXPECT MY FLAME TO WELD YOUR IRON BOOTS TO THE FLOOR, DID YOU?
ALL OF DR. DOOM'S POWER COMES FROM THAT METAL CONTROL BOX! IF I CAN JUST REACH IT...
I'VE FAILED! AN ALARM IS FLASHING! THE BOX IS DESIGNED TO ACTUALLY PROTECT ITSELF--IT'S AN ELECTRONIC SECURITY POWER SOURCE!!
MIGHT AS WELL TURN VISIBLE AGAIN! HE'S GOT ME!
15

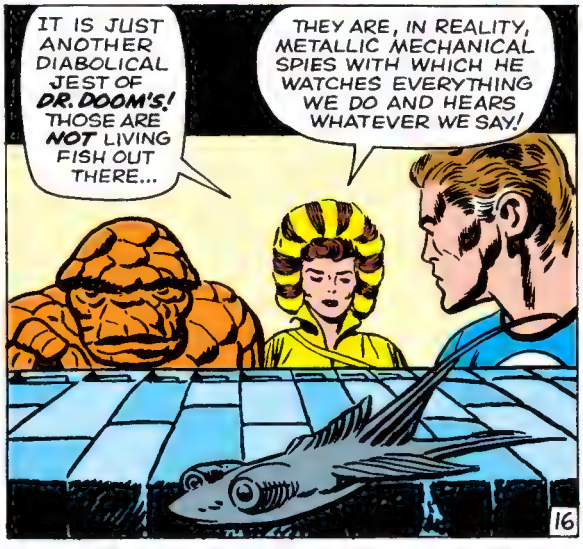

HERE SHE IS, MY HELPLESS FOES--THE EX-INVISIBLE GIRL! TRY TO SAVE HER NOW!
WE'RE JUST GONNA DO THAT LITTLE THING, YOU WALKIN' HUNK O' JUNK!

REALLY? IT MIGHT PROVE SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO SAVE ANYONE WHEN YOU YOURSELVES ARE ASLEEP, AS YOU SHALL BE IN TWO SECONDS, THANKS TO MY LITTLE SLEEP-INDUCING MIST!
FOR, YOU SEE, RICHARDS, GREAT A SCIENTIST AS YOU MAY BE, I, DOCTOR DOOM, AM BY FAR THE GREATER!!

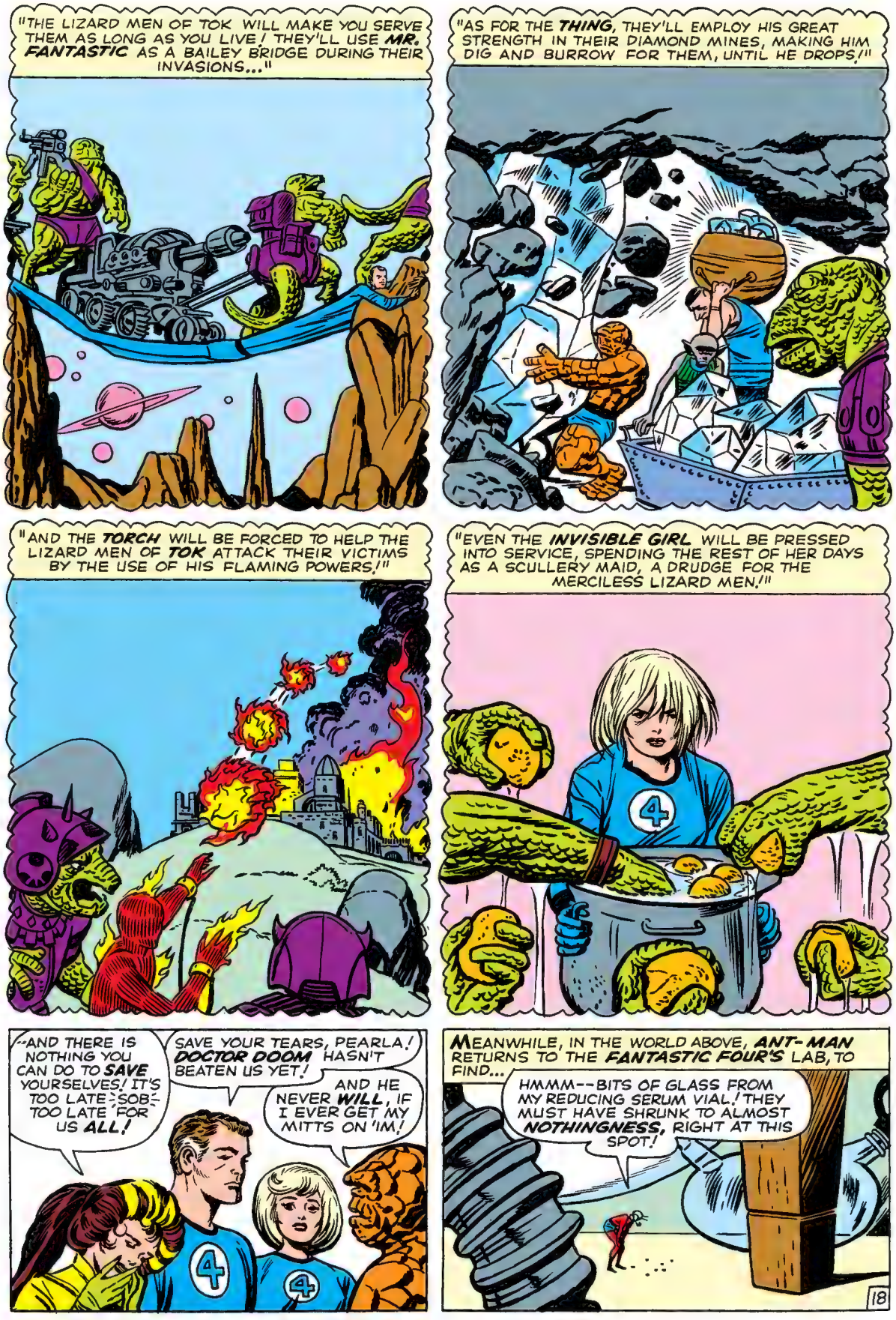

LONG MINUTES LATER, THE FANTASTIC FOUR REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS TO FIND THEMSELVES IMPRISONED IN A DANK DUNGEON, TOGETHER WITH THE CAPTIVE KING AND PRINCESS PEARLA...
YOU FOUR ARE FROM THE SAME WORLD AS DR. DOOM, THE TYRANT?
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE REALLY LICKED THIS TIME, REED! THE ODDS ARE ALL IN DOOM'S FAVOR!
HAVE TO WAKE UP --HAVE TO THINK! DR. DOOM MUST BE DEFEATED! FOR, IF WE FAIL, WHAT POWER ON EARTH --OR ON THIS WORLD CAN STOP HIM??

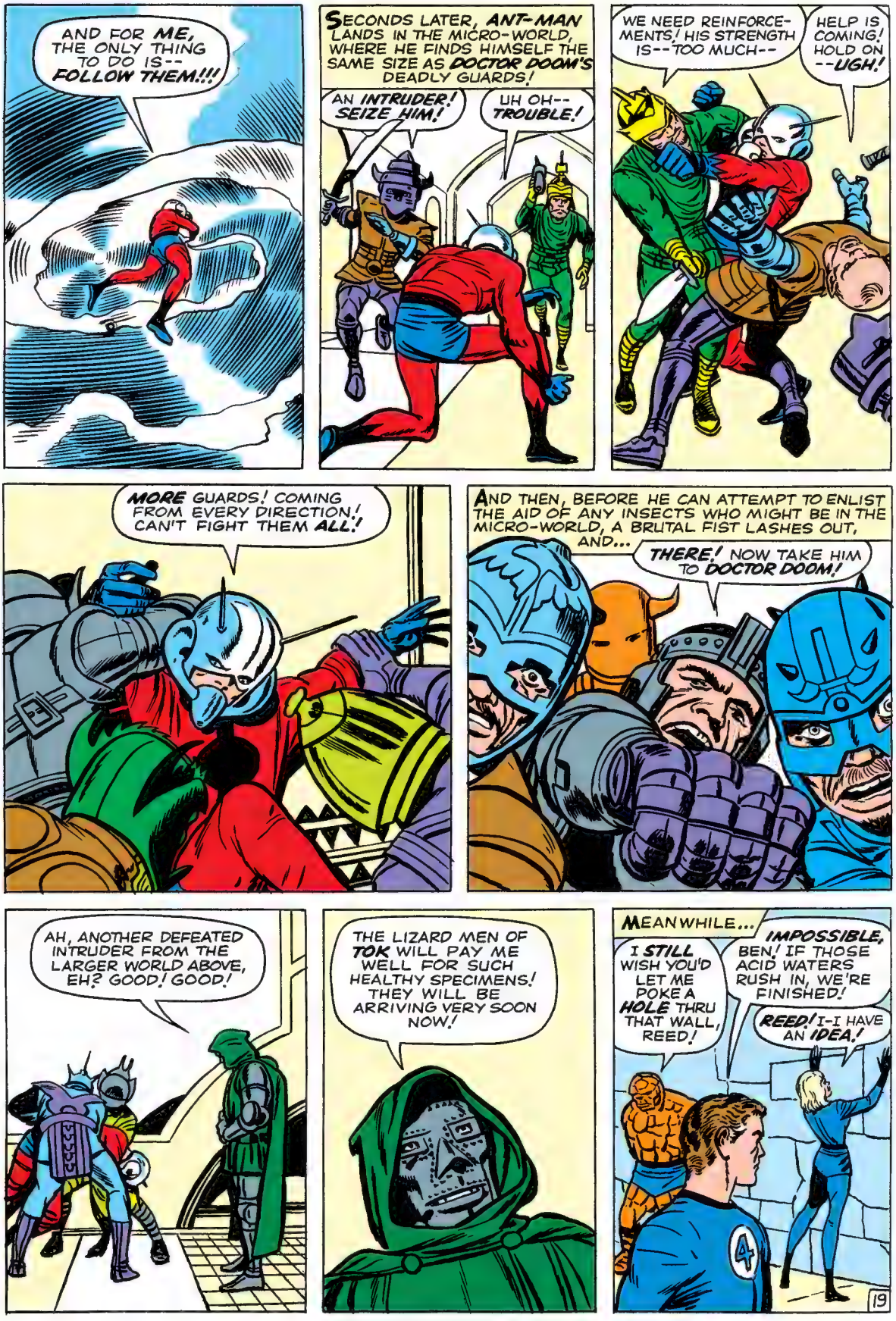
YEAH, YOUR MAJESTY--BUT WE AINT BRAGGIN' ABOUT IT!
AS LONG AS DOOM'S TWISTED MIND KEEPS THINKING HE CAN OUT-SMART US, WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE! FIRST THING TO DO IS BREAK OUT OF HERE!

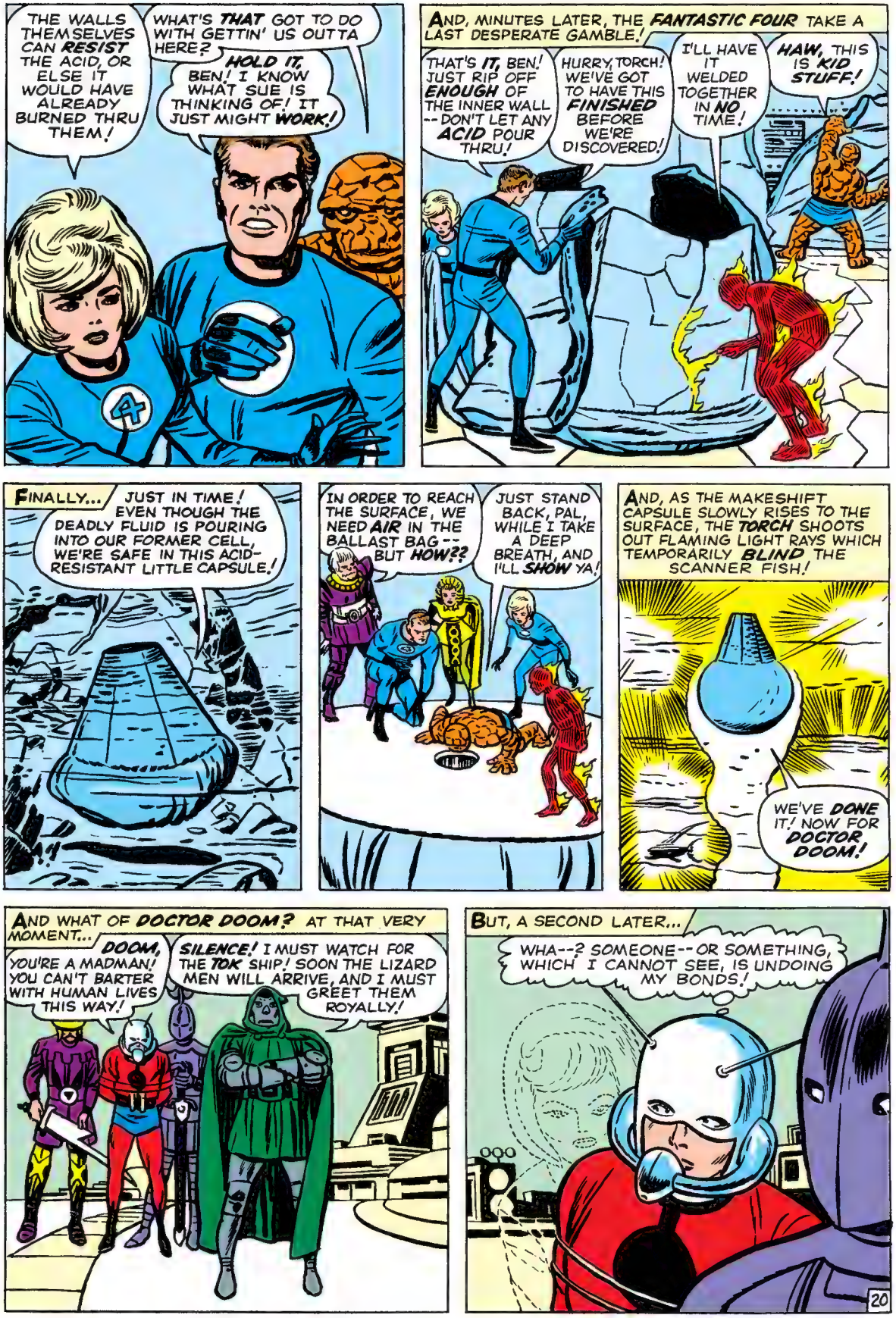

WE SEEM TO BE IN AN UNDERWATER DUNGEON! WE COULD USE THE SUB-MARINER AT A TIME LIKE THIS!
NO, MISTER FANTASTIC, THAT IS NOT WATER OUT THERE... IT IS DEADLY ACID!!

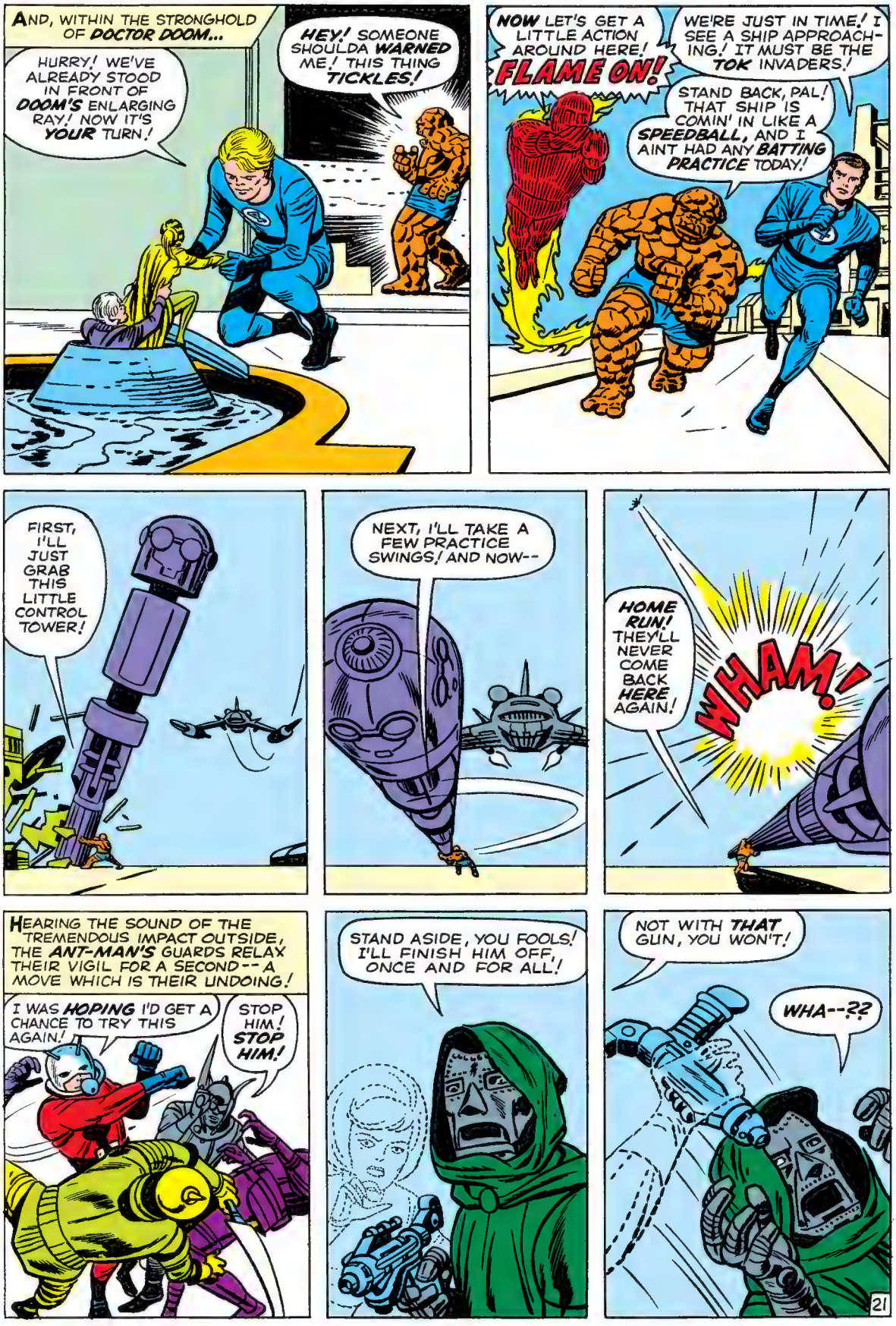

IT IS JUST ANOTHER DIABOLICAL JEST OF DR. DOOM'S! THOSE ARE NOT LIVING FISH OUT THERE...
THEY ARE, IN REALITY, METALLIC MECHANICAL SPIES WITH WHICH HE WATCHES EVERYTHING WE DO AND HEARS WHATEVER WE SAY!

DON'T YOU WORRY PRINCESS! WE'LL STILL MANAGE TO COME OUTTA THIS OKAY!
OH! THAT FLAME! IT'S SO-- FRIGHTENING!
HECK! I WOULDN'T SCARE A LIVING DOLL LIKE YOU!
FLAME OFF!
WHEN THINGS LOOK THE MOST HOPELESS FOR US, THAT'S WHEN OUR ENEMIES BETTER RUN FOR THE HILLS, CHICK!
AS FOR ME, THE HUMAN TORCH IS GONNA SEE TO IT THAT NOBODY HURTS ONE LITTLE FINGER-NAIL OF THAT DAINTY LITTLE HAND!
OHH...
C'MON, SQUIRT! LEAVE THE SPEECHES FOR TONY CURTIS! WE GOT WORK TO DO!
LEGGO, YA BIG OX! HAVEN'T YOU ANY ROMANCE IN YOUR SOUL??
WAIT A MINUTE! IT MUST HAVE BEEN YOUR VOICE WE HEARD, TRYING TO WARN US!
IT WAS! I KNEW HE WAS TRYING TO LURE YOU HERE-- SO I USED HIS RAY MACHINE A FEW TIMES WHEN HE WASN'T THERE!
"DR. DOOM WANTS ME TO MARRY HIM! BUT I DESPISE HIM! THAT IS WHY I AM HIS PRISONER, TOO! HE PLANS TO BETRAY THIS ENTIRE WORLD IF I REFUSE HIM! EVEN NOW HE IS CONTACTING THE PLANET TOK!"
"HE HAS OFFERED TOK A REWARD FOR JOINING HIM! YOU FOUR ARE TO BE THEIR REWARD--AS SLAVES! EVEN NOW, THE TOK SHIP MUST BE LANDING..."
"THE TERRIBLE WARRIORS OF TOK ARE FEARED THRUOUT OUR UNIVERSE! THEY ARE HUGE, AND POWERFUL, COMING FROM A HEAVY PLANET WITH GRAVITY A DOZEN TIMES STRONGER THAN OURS! AND THEY ARE COMING FOR-- YOU!"

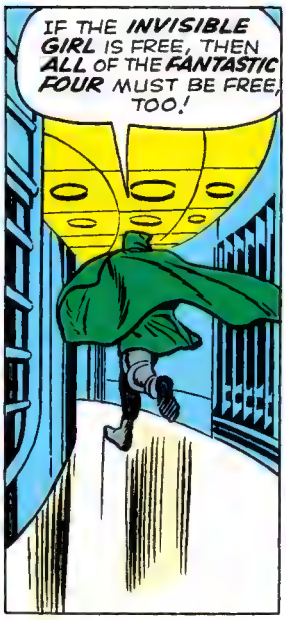

"THE LIZARD MEN OF TOK WILL MAKE YOU SERVE THEM AS LONG AS YOU LIVE! THEY'LL USE MR. FANTASTIC AS A BAILEY BRIDGE DURING THEIR INVASIONS..."
"AS FOR THE THING, THEY'LL EMPLOY HIS GREAT STRENGTH IN THEIR DIAMOND MINES, MAKING HIM DIG AND BURROW FOR THEM, UNTIL HE DROPS!"
"AND THE TORCH WILL BE FORCED TO HELP THE LIZARD MEN OF TOK ATTACK THEIR VICTIMS BY THE USE OF HIS FLAMING POWERS!"
"EVEN THE INVISIBLE GIRL WILL BE PRESSED INTO SERVICE, SPENDING THE REST OF HER DAYS AS A SCULLERY MAID, A DRUDGE FOR THE MERCILESS LIZARD MEN."
--AND THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO SAVE YOURSELVES! IT'S TOO LATE :SOB: TOO LATE FOR US ALL!
SAVE YOUR TEARS, PEARLA! DOCTOR DOOM HASN'T BEATEN US YET!
AND HE NEVER WILL, IF I EVER GET MY MITTS ON 'IM!
MEANWHILE, IN THE WORLD ABOVE, ANT-MAN RETURNS TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S LAB, TO FIND...
HMMM--BITS OF GLASS FROM MY REDUCING SERUM VIAL! THEY MUST HAVE SHRUNK TO ALMOST NOTHINGNESS, RIGHT AT THIS SPOT!
18


AND FOR ME, THE ONLY THING TO DO IS-- FOLLOW THEM!!!
SECONDS LATER, ANT-MAN LANDS IN THE MICRO-WORLD, WHERE HE FINDS HIMSELF THE SAME SIZE AS DOCTOR DOOM'S DEADLY GUARDS!
AN INTRUDER! SEIZE HIM!
UH OH-- TROUBLE!
WE NEED REINFORCE-MENTS! HIS STRENGTH IS--TOO MUCH--
HELP IS COMING! HOLD ON --UGH!
MORE GUARDS! COMING FROM EVERY DIRECTION! CAN'T FIGHT THEM ALL!
AND THEN, BEFORE HE CAN ATTEMPT TO ENLIST THE AID OF ANY INSECTS WHO MIGHT BE IN THE MICRO-WORLD, A BRUTAL FIST LASHES OUT, AND...
THERE! NOW TAKE HIM TO DOCTOR DOOM!
AH, ANOTHER DEFEATED INTRUDER FROM THE LARGER WORLD ABOVE, EH? GOOD! GOOD!
THE LIZARD MEN OF TOK WILL PAY ME WELL FOR SUCH HEALTHY SPECIMENS! THEY WILL BE ARRIVING VERY SOON NOW!
MEANWHILE...
I STILL WISH YOU'D LET ME POKE A HOLE THRU THAT WALL, REED!
IMPOSSIBLE, BEN! IF THOSE ACID WATERS RUSH IN, WE'RE FINISHED!
REED! I-I HAVE AN IDEA!
4
19


THE WALLS THEMSELVES CAN RESIST THE ACID, OR ELSE IT WOULD HAVE ALREADY BURNED THRU THEM!
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH GETTIN' US OUTTA HERE?
HOLD IT, BEN! I KNOW WHAT SUE IS THINKING OF! IT JUST MIGHT WORK!
AND, MINUTES LATER, THE FANTASTIC FOUR TAKE A LAST DESPERATE GAMBLE!
THAT'S IT, BEN! JUST RIP OFF ENOUGH OF THE INNER WALL -- DON'T LET ANY ACID POUR THRU!
HURRY, TORCH! WE'VE GOT TO HAVE THIS FINISHED BEFORE WE'RE DISCOVERED!
I'LL HAVE IT WELDED TOGETHER IN NO TIME!
HAW, THIS IS KID STUFF!
FINALLY... JUST IN TIME! EVEN THOUGH THE DEADLY FLUID IS POURING INTO OUR FORMER CELL, WE'RE SAFE IN THIS ACID-RESISTANT LITTLE CAPSULE!
IN ORDER TO REACH THE SURFACE, WE NEED AIR IN THE BALLAST BAG -- BUT HOW??
JUST STAND BACK, PAL, WHILE I TAKE A DEEP BREATH, AND I'LL SHOW YA!
AND, AS THE MAKESHIFT CAPSULE SLOWLY RISES TO THE SURFACE, THE TORCH SHOOTS OUT FLAMING LIGHT RAYS WHICH TEMPORARILY BLIND THE SCANNER FISH!
WE'VE DONE IT! NOW FOR DOCTOR DOOM!
AND WHAT OF DOCTOR DOOM? AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
DOOM, YOU'RE A MADMAN! YOU CAN'T BARTER WITH HUMAN LIVES THIS WAY!
SILENCE! I MUST WATCH FOR THE TOK SHIP! SOON THE LIZARD MEN WILL ARRIVE, AND I MUST GREET THEM ROYALLY!
BUT, A SECOND LATER...
WHA--? SOMEONE--OR SOMETHING, WHICH I CANNOT SEE, IS UNDOING MY BONDS!


AND, WITHIN THE STRONGHOLD OF DOCTOR DOOM...
HURRY! WE'VE ALREADY STOOD IN FRONT OF DOOM'S ENLARGING RAY! NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!
HEY! SOMEONE SHOULDA WARNED ME! THIS THING TICKLES!
NOW LET'S GET A LITTLE ACTION AROUND HERE!
FLAME ON!
WE'RE JUST IN TIME! I SEE A SHIP APPROACHING! IT MUST BE THE TOK INVADERS!
STAND BACK, PAL! THAT SHIP IS COMIN' IN LIKE A SPEEDBALL, AND I AINT HAD ANY BATTING PRACTICE TODAY!
FIRST, I'LL JUST GRAB THIS LITTLE CONTROL TOWER!
NEXT, I'LL TAKE A FEW PRACTICE SWINGS! AND NOW--
HOME RUN! THEY'LL NEVER COME BACK HERE AGAIN!
WHAM!
HEARING THE SOUND OF THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT OUTSIDE, THE ANT-MAN'S GUARDS RELAX THEIR VIGIL FOR A SECOND -- A MOVE WHICH IS THEIR UNDOING!
I WAS HOPING I'D GET A CHANCE TO TRY THIS AGAIN!
STOP HIM! STOP HIM!
STAND ASIDE, YOU FOOLS! I'LL FINISH HIM OFF, ONCE AND FOR ALL!
NOT WITH THAT GUN, YOU WON'T!
WHA--??
21

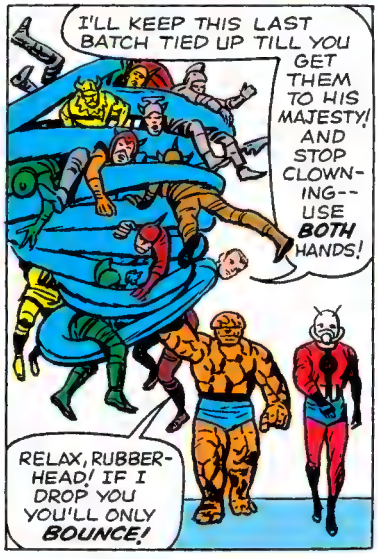
A DISEMBODIED VOICE! IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING--THE INVISIBLE GIRL IS FREE!
I'VE GOT TO FLEE TO SAFETY--THRU THIS TRAP DOOR!


IF THE INVISIBLE GIRL IS FREE, THEN ALL OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR MUST BE FREE, TOO!

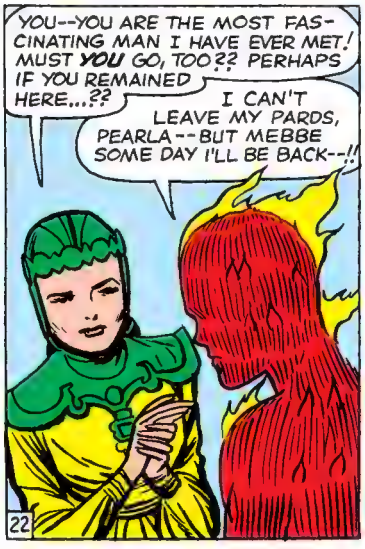
BUT BY THE TIME THEY FIGURE OUT WHERE TO FIND ME, I'LL BE GONE!

I'LL BE WAITING FOR THEM--BACK ON THE SURFACE OF OUR OWN WORLD! I'LL GIVE THEM A RECEPTION THEY'LL NEVER FORGET!

WITH DOCTOR DOOM GONE, ALL THE FIGHT GOES OUT OF HIS GUARDS, AND SO...
I'LL RELEASE MY FLAMING FENCE FROM AROUND YOU GUYS! I FIGURE YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH!


I'LL KEEP THIS LAST BATCH TIED UP TILL YOU GET THEM TO HIS MAJESTY! AND STOP CLOWNING--USE BOTH HANDS!
RELAX, RUBBER-HEAD! IF I DROP YOU YOU'LL ONLY BOUNCE!

YOU HAVE SAVED MY KINGDOM! YOU HAVE DRIVEN DOCTOR DOOM BACK TO HIS OWN WORLD! HOW CAN I EVER REPAY YOU?
NO NEED FOR THAT, YOUR MAJESTY! SIMPLY PERMIT US TO USE YOUR ENLARGING RAY, SO THAT WE CAN GO AFTER DOCTOR DOOM!
WISH GRANTED!


YOU--YOU ARE THE MOST FASCINATING MAN I HAVE EVER MET! MUST YOU GO, TOO?? PERHAPS IF YOU REMAINED HERE...??
I CAN'T LEAVE MY PARDS, PEARLA--BUT MEBBE SOME DAY I'LL BE BACK--!!
22

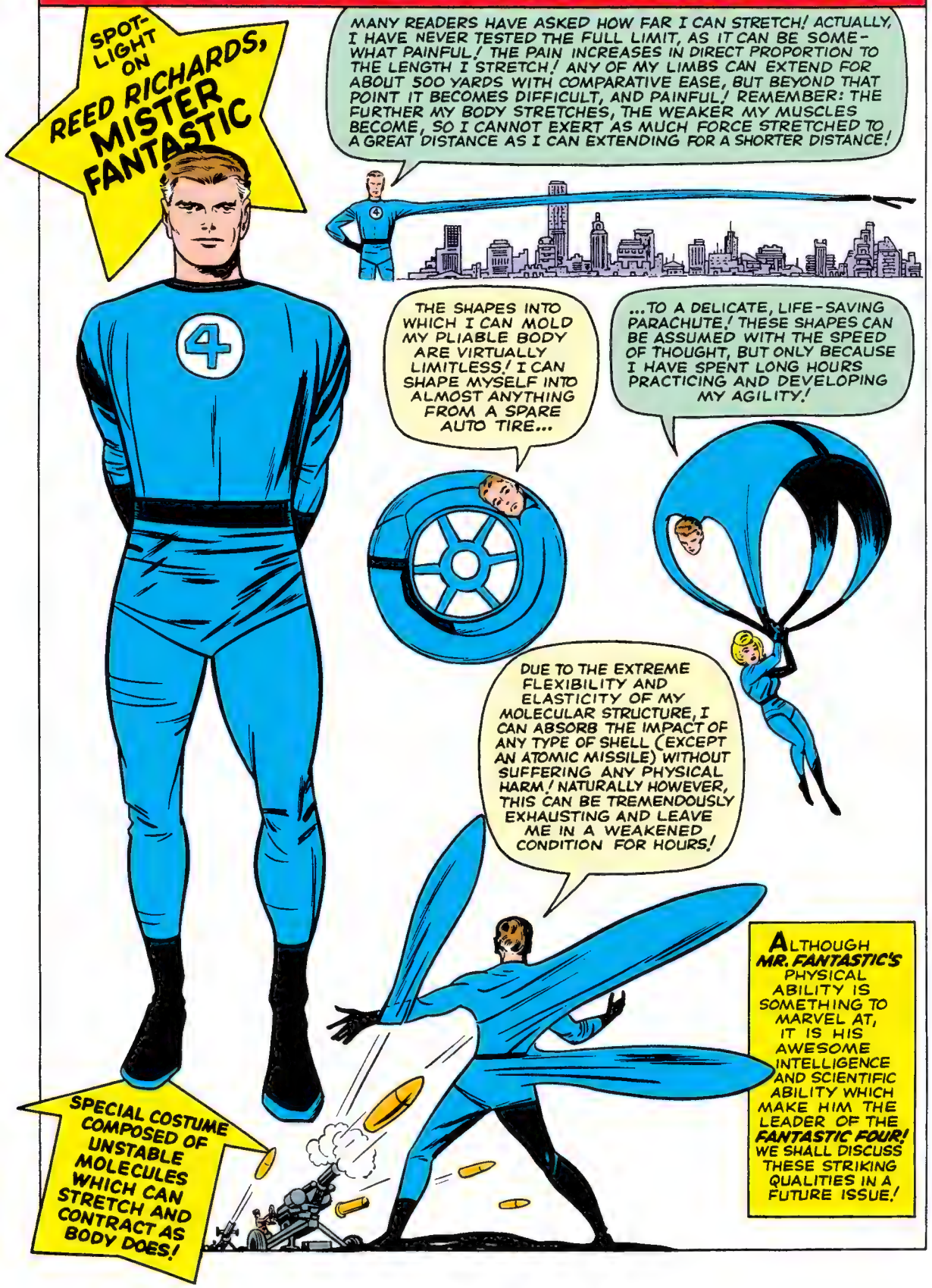
KNOCK OFF THE MUSH STUFF, HOT HEAD! WE STILL HAVEN'T CAUGHT DOCTOR DOOM, REMEMBER?!!

AND SO, STEPPING IN FRONT OF THE ENLARGER RAYS, AS THEY PREPARE TO RETURN TO THEIR OWN WORLD, THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND ANT-MAN BID FAREWELL TO THE DWELLERS OF THE MICRO-WORLD...
...AS THEY AGAIN TAKE UP THE HUNT FOR DOCTOR DOOM, THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN ON EARTH! BUT, THAT'S A TALE FOR NEXT ISSUE...

THE END

FANTASTIC FOUR FEATURE PAGE

SPOT-LIGHT ON REED RICHARDS, MISTER FANTASTIC


MANY READERS HAVE ASKED HOW FAR I CAN STRETCH! ACTUALLY, I HAVE NEVER TESTED THE FULL LIMIT, AS IT CAN BE SOMEWHAT PAINFUL! THE PAIN INCREASES IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO THE LENGTH I STRETCH! ANY OF MY LIMBS CAN EXTEND FOR ABOUT 500 YARDS WITH COMPARATIVE EASE, BUT BEYOND THAT POINT IT BECOMES DIFFICULT, AND PAINFUL! REMEMBER: THE FURTHER MY BODY STRETCHES, THE WEAKER MY MUSCLES BECOME, SO I CANNOT EXERT AS MUCH FORCE STRETCHED TO A GREAT DISTANCE AS I CAN EXTENDING FOR A SHORTER DISTANCE!
THE SHAPES INTO WHICH I CAN MOLD MY PLIABLE BODY ARE VIRTUALLY LIMITLESS! I CAN SHAPE MYSELF INTO ALMOST ANYTHING FROM A SPARE AUTO TIRE...
...TO A DELICATE, LIFE-SAVING PARACHUTE! THESE SHAPES CAN BE ASSUMED WITH THE SPEED OF THOUGHT, BUT ONLY BECAUSE I HAVE SPENT LONG HOURS PRACTICING AND DEVELOPING MY AGILITY!
DUE TO THE EXTREME FLEXIBILITY AND ELASTICITY OF MY MOLECULAR STRUCTURE, I CAN ABSORB THE IMPACT OF ANY TYPE OF SHELL (EXCEPT AN ATOMIC MISSILE) WITHOUT SUFFERING ANY PHYSICAL HARM! NATURALLY HOWEVER, THIS CAN BE TREMENDOUSLY EXHAUSTING AND LEAVE ME IN A WEAKENED CONDITION FOR HOURS!
SPECIAL COSTUME COMPOSED OF UNSTABLE MOLECULES WHICH CAN STRETCH AND CONTRACT AS BODY DOES!
ALTHOUGH MR. FANTASTIC'S PHYSICAL ABILITY IS SOMETHING TO MARVEL AT, IT IS HIS AWESOME INTELLIGENCE AND SCIENTIFIC ABILITY WHICH MAKE HIM THE LEADER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR! WE SHALL DISCUSS THESE STRIKING QUALITIES IN A FUTURE ISSUE!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
IND.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Fantastic Four
17
AUG.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
"IN THE CLUTCHES OF DOCTOR DOOM!"
CAN AMERICA'S MOST COLORFUL SUPER-COMBO ESCAPE FROM
THE MENACE OF THE MOVING BARS!
THE THREAT OF THE SWIRLING CEMENT!
THE PANIC OF THE DEADLY WHIRLWIND!
THE PERIL OF THE ROOM WITHOUT A FLOOR!
MARVEL COMICS GROUP USHERS IN "THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!"
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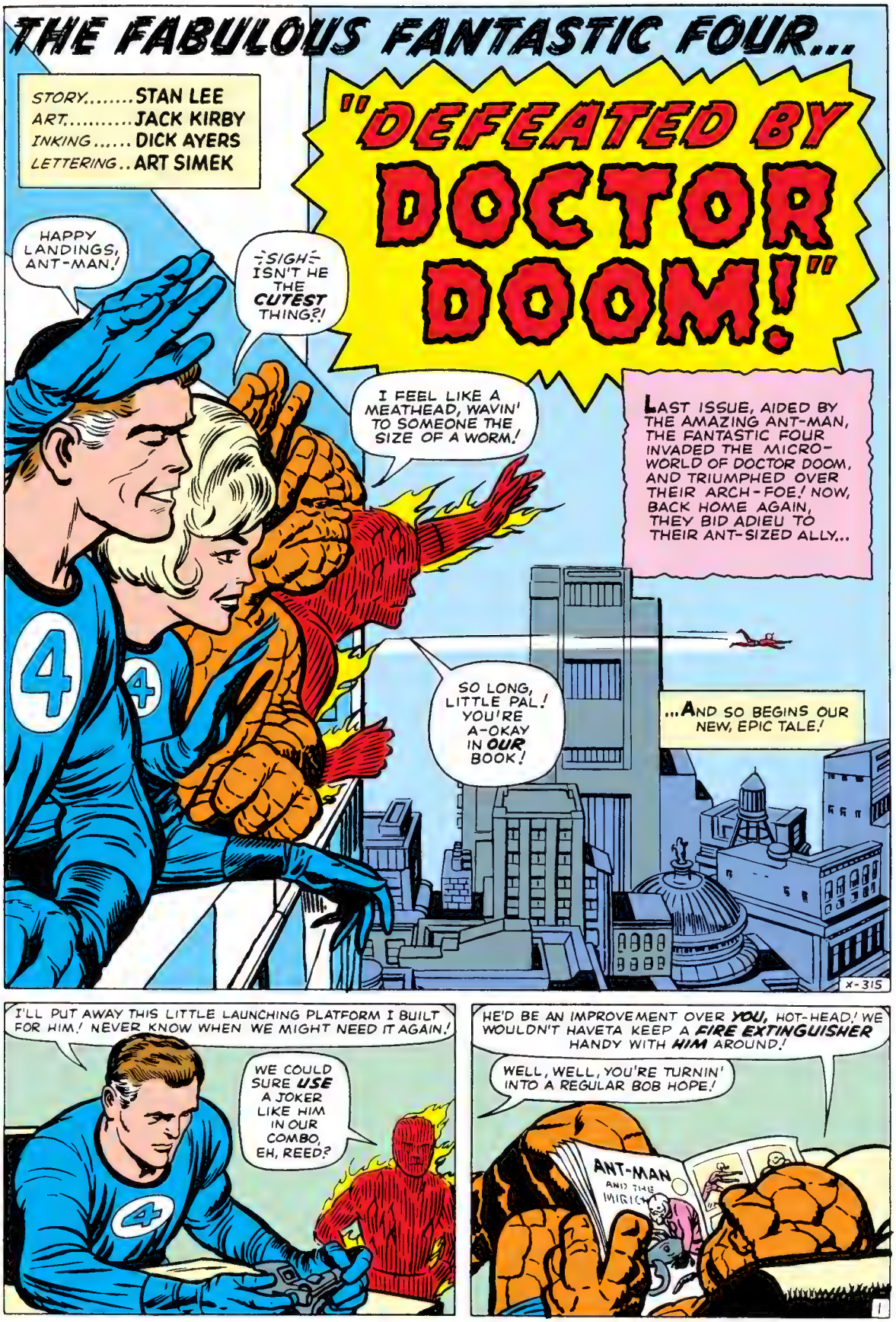
THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR...
STORY.....STAN LEE
ART.....JACK KIRBY
INKING.....DICK AYERS
LETTERING..ART SIMEK
"DEFEATED BY DOCTOR DOOM!"
HAPPY LANDINGS, ANT-MAN!
-SIGH- ISN'T HE THE CUTEST THING?!
I FEEL LIKE A MEATHEAD, WAVIN' TO SOMEONE THE SIZE OF A WORM!
LAST ISSUE, AIDED BY THE AMAZING ANT-MAN, THE FANTASTIC FOUR INVADED THE MICRO-WORLD OF DOCTOR DOOM, AND TRIUMPHED OVER THEIR ARCH-FOE! NOW, BACK HOME AGAIN, THEY BID ADIEU TO THEIR ANT-SIZED ALLY...
SO LONG, LITTLE PAL! YOU'RE A-OKAY IN OUR BOOK!
...AND SO BEGINS OUR NEW, EPIC TALE!
X-315
I'LL PUT AWAY THIS LITTLE LAUNCHING PLATFORM I BUILT FOR HIM! NEVER KNOW WHEN WE MIGHT NEED IT AGAIN!
WE COULD SURE USE A JOKER LIKE HIM IN OUR COMBO, EH, REED?
HE'D BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER YOU, HOT-HEAD! WE WOULDN'T HAVETA KEEP A FIRE EXTINGUISHER HANDY WITH HIM AROUND!
WELL, WELL, YOU'RE TURNIN' INTO A REGULAR BOB HOPE!
ANT-MAN
AND THE
1

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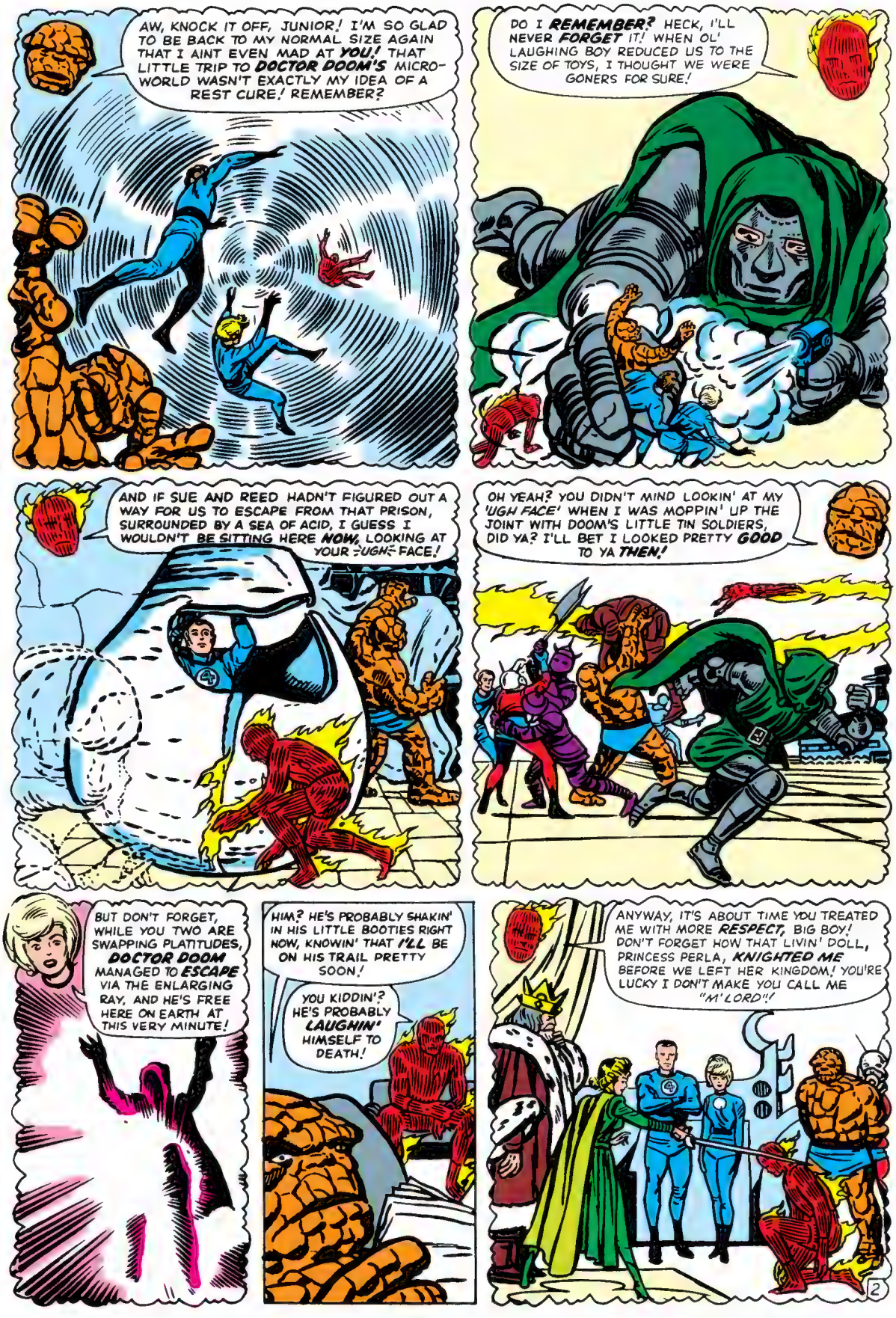
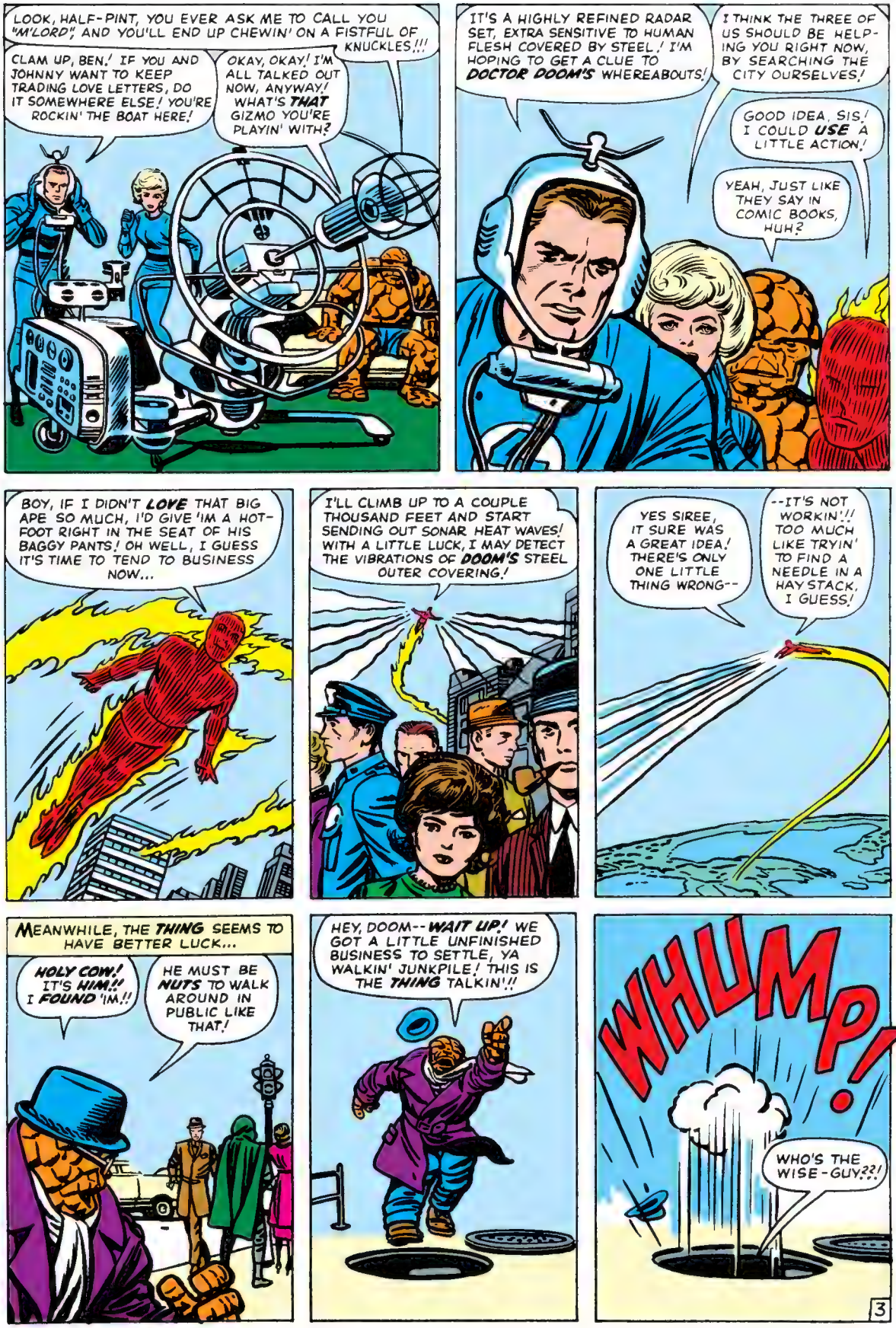
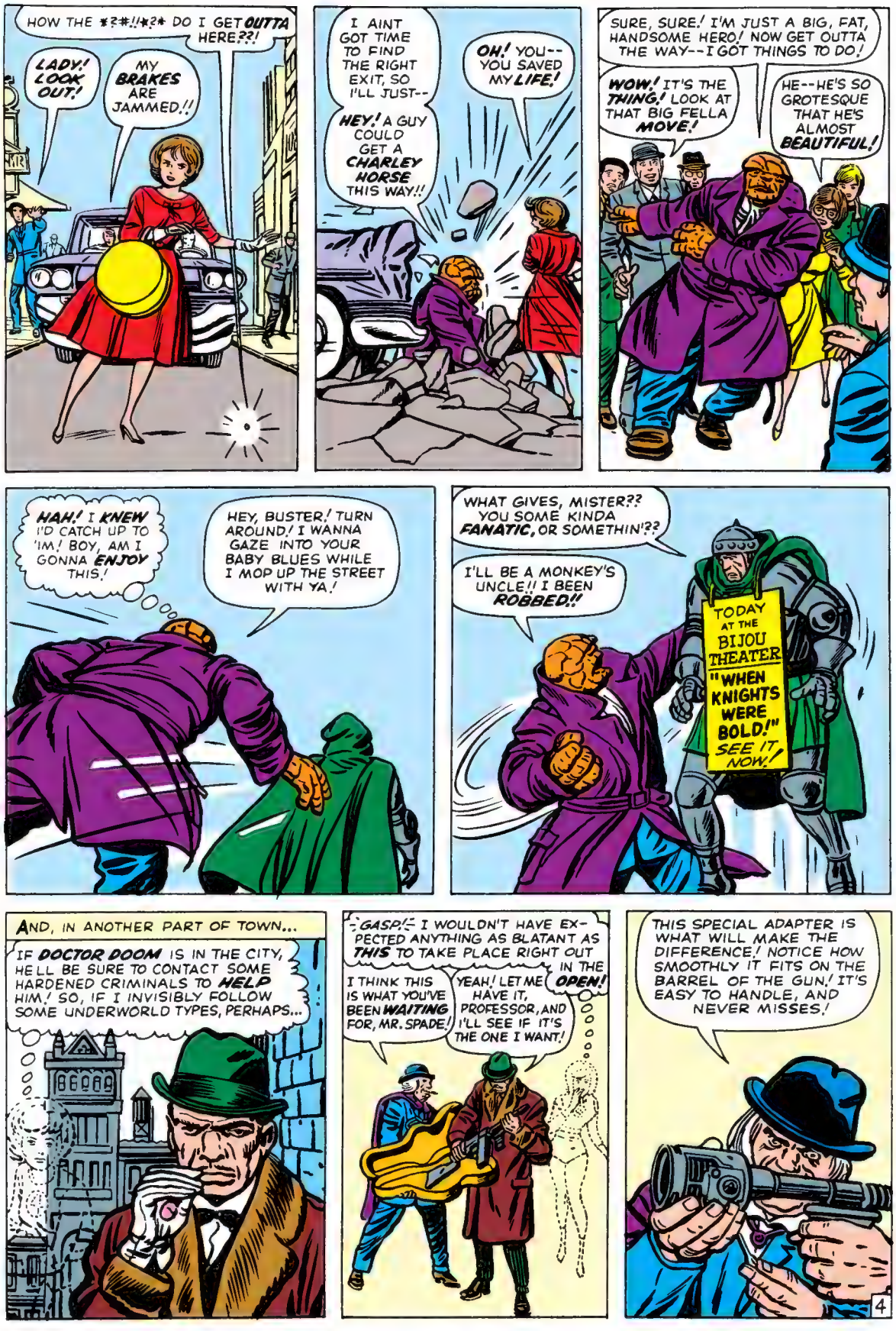
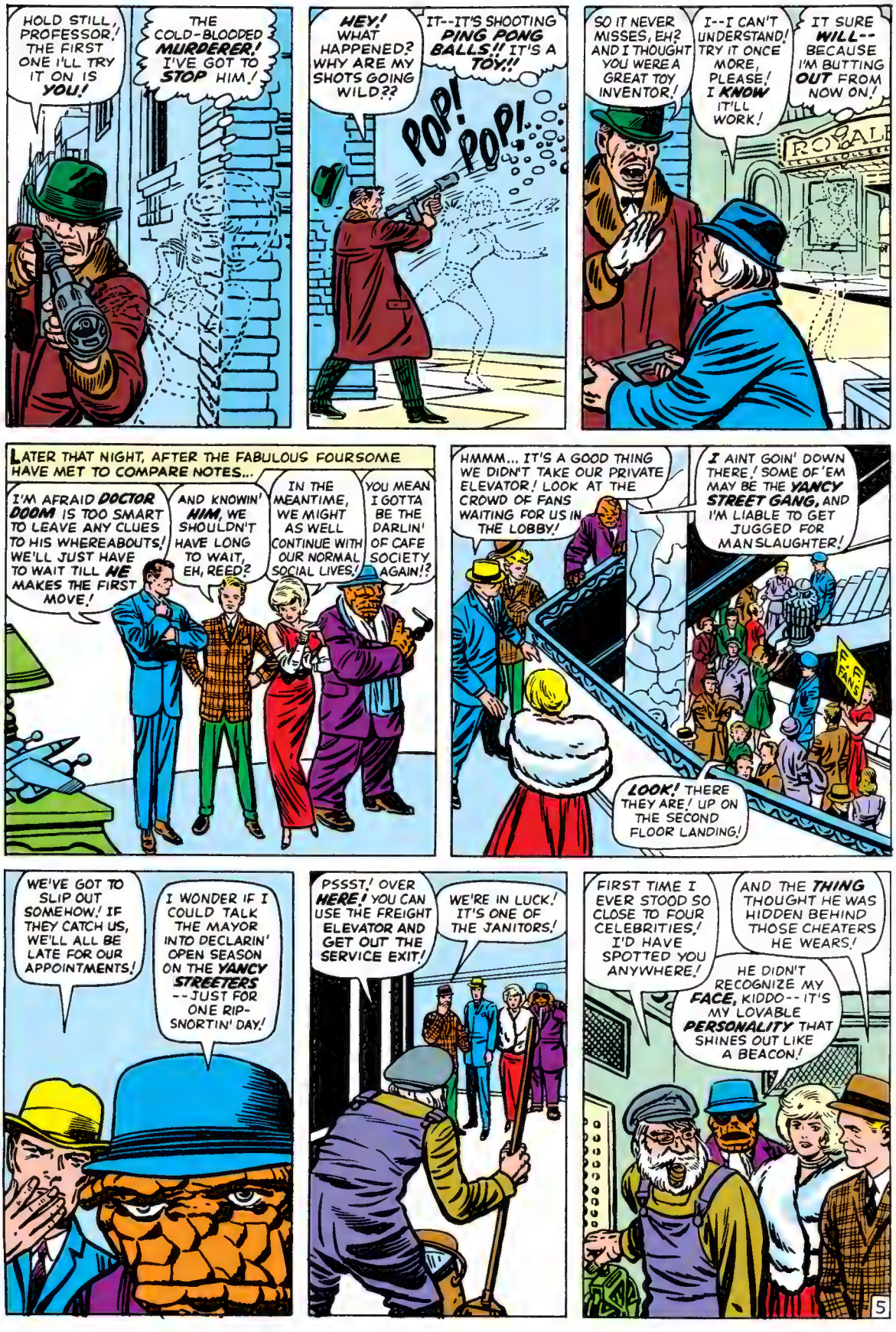
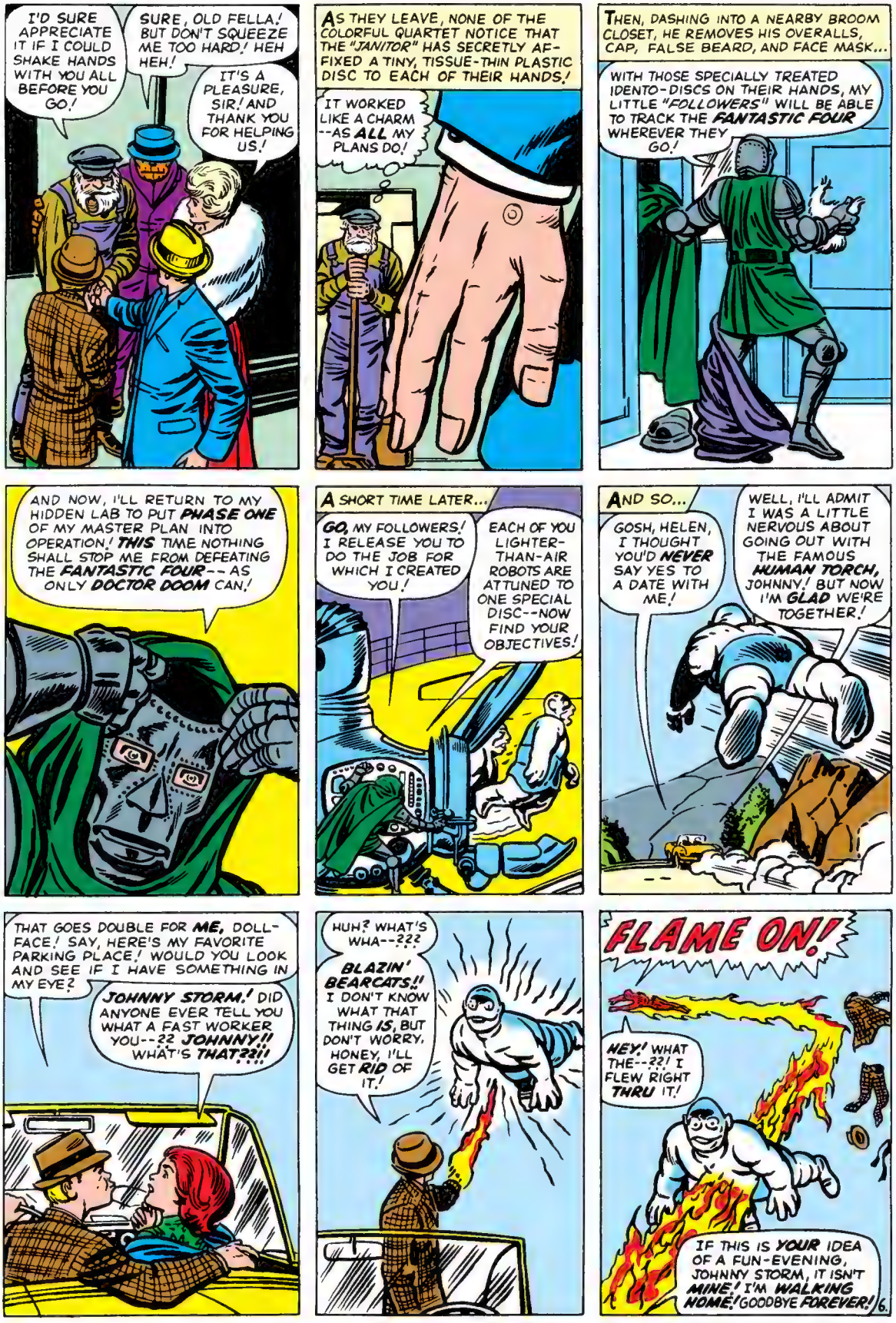

AW, KNOCK IT OFF, JUNIOR! I'M SO GLAD TO BE BACK TO MY NORMAL SIZE AGAIN THAT I AINT EVEN MAD AT YOU! THAT LITTLE TRIP TO DOCTOR DOOM'S MICRO-WORLD WASN'T EXACTLY MY IDEA OF A REST CURE! REMEMBER?
DO I REMEMBER? HECK, I'LL NEVER FORGET IT! WHEN OL' LAUGHING BOY REDUCED US TO THE SIZE OF TOYS, I THOUGHT WE WERE GONERS FOR SURE!
AND IF SUE AND REED HADN'T FIGURED OUT A WAY FOR US TO ESCAPE FROM THAT PRISON, SURROUNDED BY A SEA OF ACID, I GUESS I WOULDN'T BE SITTING HERE NOW, LOOKING AT YOUR =UGH= FACE!
OH YEAH? YOU DIDN'T MIND LOOKIN' AT MY 'UGH FACE' WHEN I WAS MOPPIN' UP THE JOINT WITH DOOM'S LITTLE TIN SOLDIERS, DID YA? I'LL BET I LOOKED PRETTY GOOD TO YA THEN!
BUT DON'T FORGET, WHILE YOU TWO ARE SWAPPING PLATITUDES, DOCTOR DOOM MANAGED TO ESCAPE VIA THE ENLARGING RAY, AND HE'S FREE HERE ON EARTH AT THIS VERY MINUTE!
HIM? HE'S PROBABLY SHAKIN' IN HIS LITTLE BOOTIES RIGHT NOW, KNOWIN' THAT I'LL BE ON HIS TRAIL PRETTY SOON!
YOU KIDDIN'? HE'S PROBABLY LAUGHIN' HIMSELF TO DEATH!
ANYWAY, IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU TREATED ME WITH MORE RESPECT, BIG BOY! DON'T FORGET HOW THAT LIVIN' DOLL, PRINCESS PERLA, KNIGHTED ME BEFORE WE LEFT HER KINGDOM! YOU'RE LUCKY I DON'T MAKE YOU CALL ME "M'LORD"!
2

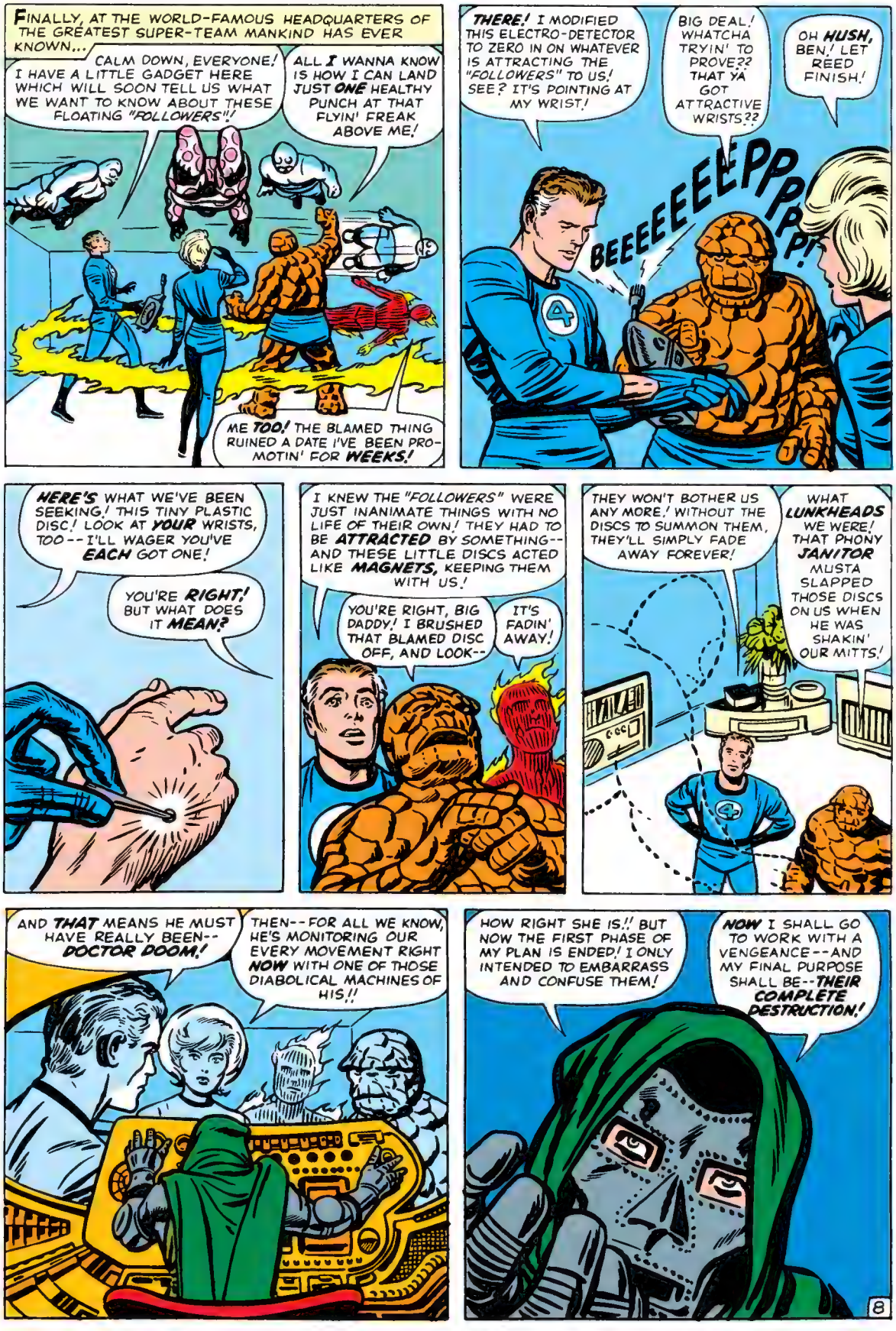

LOOK, HALF-PINT, YOU EVER ASK ME TO CALL YOU "M'LORD", AND YOU'LL END UP CHEWIN' ON A FISTFUL OF KNUCKLES!!!
CLAM UP, BEN! IF YOU AND JOHNNY WANT TO KEEP TRADING LOVE LETTERS, DO IT SOMEWHERE ELSE! YOU'RE ROCKIN' THE BOAT HERE!
OKAY, OKAY! I'M ALL TALKED OUT NOW, ANYWAY! WHAT'S THAT GIZMO YOU'RE PLAYIN' WITH?
IT'S A HIGHLY REFINED RADAR SET, EXTRA SENSITIVE TO HUMAN FLESH COVERED BY STEEL! I'M HOPING TO GET A CLUE TO DOCTOR DOOM'S WHEREABOUTS!
I THINK THE THREE OF US SHOULD BE HELPING YOU RIGHT NOW, BY SEARCHING THE CITY OURSELVES!
GOOD IDEA, SIS! I COULD USE A LITTLE ACTION!
YEAH, JUST LIKE THEY SAY IN COMIC BOOKS, HUH?
BOY, IF I DIDN'T LOVE THAT BIG APE SO MUCH, I'D GIVE 'IM A HOT-FOOT RIGHT IN THE SEAT OF HIS BAGGY PANTS! OH WELL, I GUESS IT'S TIME TO TEND TO BUSINESS NOW...
I'LL CLIMB UP TO A COUPLE THOUSAND FEET AND START SENDING OUT SONAR HEAT WAVES! WITH A LITTLE LUCK, I MAY DETECT THE VIBRATIONS OF DOOM'S STEEL OUTER COVERING!
YES SIREE, IT SURE WAS A GREAT IDEA! THERE'S ONLY ONE LITTLE THING WRONG--
--IT'S NOT WORKIN'!! TOO MUCH LIKE TRYIN' TO FIND A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK, I GUESS!
MEANWHILE, THE THING SEEMS TO HAVE BETTER LUCK...
HOLY COW! IT'S HIM!! I FOUND 'IM!!
HE MUST BE NUTS TO WALK AROUND IN PUBLIC LIKE THAT!
HEY, DOOM--WAIT UP! WE GOT A LITTLE UNFINISHED BUSINESS TO SETTLE, YA WALKIN' JUNKPILE! THIS IS THE THING TALKIN'!!
WHUMP!
WHO'S THE WISE-GUY?!?!
3

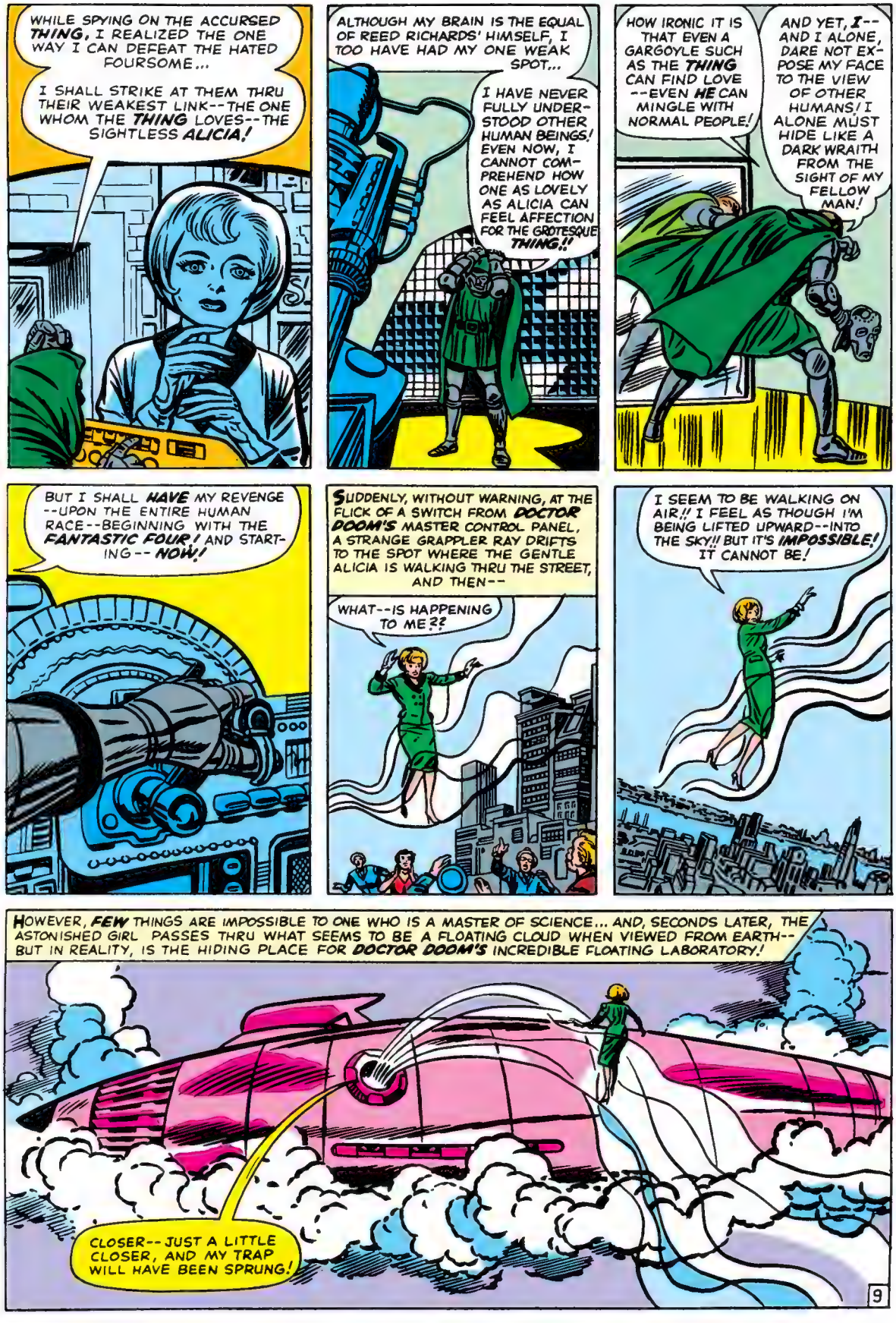

HOW THE *?*#!!*?* DO I GET OUTTA HERE??!
LADY! LOOK OUT!
MY BRAKES ARE JAMMED!!
I AINT GOT TIME TO FIND THE RIGHT EXIT, SO I'LL JUST--
HEY! A GUY COULD GET A CHARLEY HORSE THIS WAY!!
OH! YOU-- YOU SAVED MY LIFE!
SURE, SURE! I'M JUST A BIG, FAT, HANDSOME HERO! NOW GET OUTTA THE WAY--I GOT THINGS TO DO!
WOW! IT'S THE THING! LOOK AT THAT BIG FELLA MOVE!
HE--HE'S SO GROTESQUE THAT HE'S ALMOST BEAUTIFUL!
HAH! I KNEW I'D CATCH UP TO 'IM! BOY, AM I GONNA ENJOY THIS!
HEY, BUSTER! TURN AROUND! I WANNA GAZE INTO YOUR BABY BLUES WHILE I MOP UP THE STREET WITH YA!
WHAT GIVES, MISTER?? YOU SOME KINDA FANATIC, OR SOMETHIN'??
I'LL BE A MONKEY'S UNCLE!! I BEEN ROBBED!!
TODAY AT THE BIJOU THEATER "WHEN KNIGHTS WERE BOLD!" SEE IT NOW!
AND, IN ANOTHER PART OF TOWN...
IF DOCTOR DOOM IS IN THE CITY, HE'LL BE SURE TO CONTACT SOME HARDENED CRIMINALS TO HELP HIM! SO, IF I INVISIBLY FOLLOW SOME UNDERWORLD TYPES, PERHAPS...
-GASP!- I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED ANYTHING AS BLATANT AS THIS TO TAKE PLACE RIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN!
I THINK THIS IS WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR, MR. SPADE!
YEAH! LET ME HAVE IT, PROFESSOR, AND I'LL SEE IF IT'S THE ONE I WANT!
THIS SPECIAL ADAPTER IS WHAT WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE! NOTICE HOW SMOOTHLY IT FITS ON THE BARREL OF THE GUN! IT'S EASY TO HANDLE, AND NEVER MISSES!
4

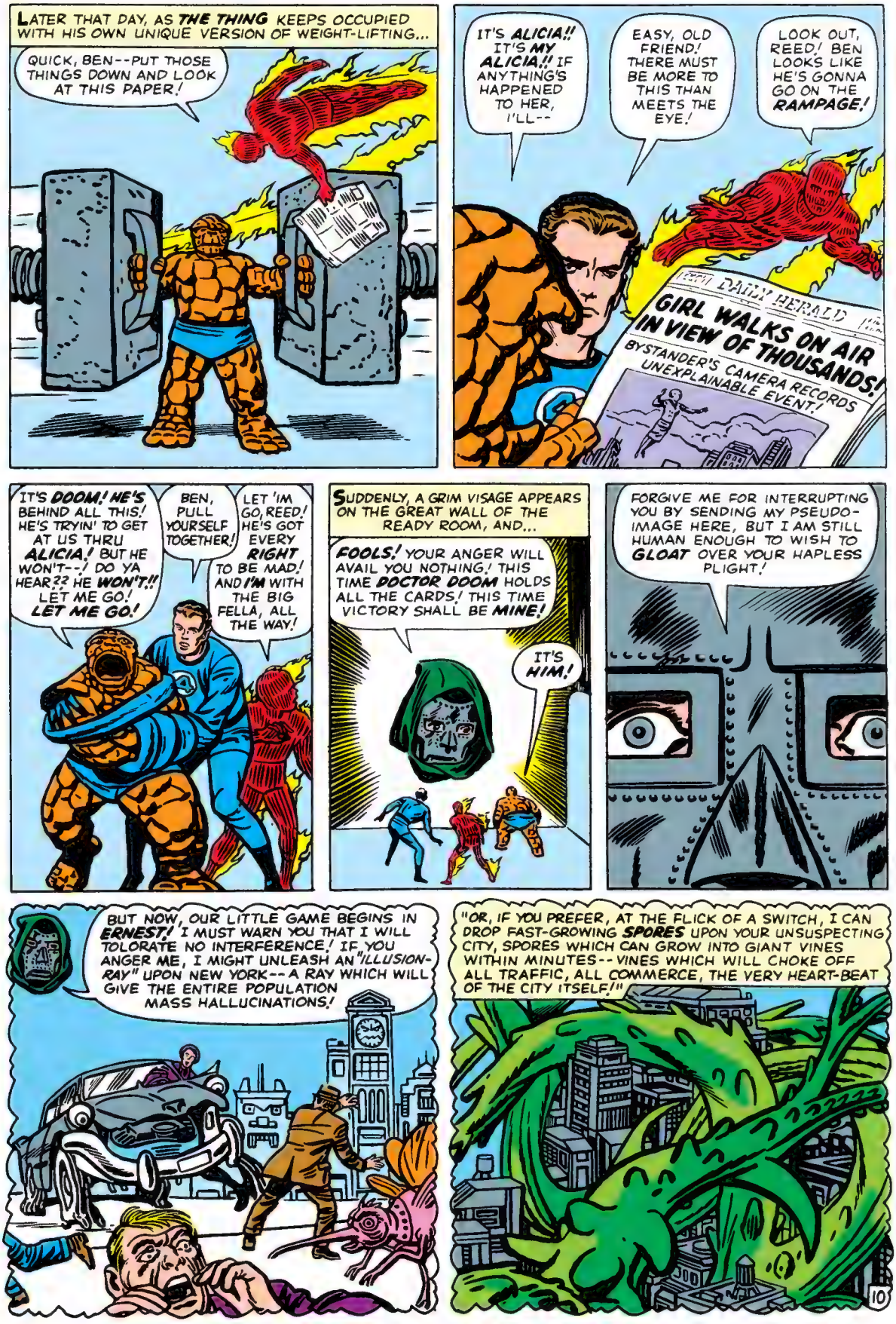

HOLD STILL, PROFESSOR! THE FIRST ONE I'LL TRY IT ON IS YOU!
THE COLD-BLOODED MURDERER! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED? WHY ARE MY SHOTS GOING WILD??
IT--IT'S SHOOTING PING PONG BALLS!! IT'S A TOY!!
POP! POP!
SO IT NEVER MISSES, EH? AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE A GREAT TOY INVENTOR!
I--I CAN'T UNDERSTAND! TRY IT ONCE MORE, PLEASE! I KNOW IT'LL WORK!
IT SURE WILL-- BECAUSE I'M BUTTING OUT FROM NOW ON!
ROYAL
LATER THAT NIGHT, AFTER THE FABULOUS FOURSOME HAVE MET TO COMPARE NOTES...
I'M AFRAID DOCTOR DOOM IS TOO SMART TO LEAVE ANY CLUES TO HIS WHEREABOUTS! WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT TILL HE MAKES THE FIRST MOVE!
AND KNOWIN' HIM, WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LONG TO WAIT, EH, REED?
IN THE MEANTIME, WE MIGHT AS WELL CONTINUE WITH OUR NORMAL SOCIAL LIVES!
YOU MEAN I GOTTA BE THE DARLIN' OF CAFE SOCIETY AGAIN!?
HMMM... IT'S A GOOD THING WE DIDN'T TAKE OUR PRIVATE ELEVATOR! LOOK AT THE CROWD OF FANS WAITING FOR US IN THE LOBBY!
I AINT GOIN' DOWN THERE! SOME OF 'EM MAY BE THE YANCY STREET GANG, AND I'M LIABLE TO GET JUGGED FOR MANSLAUGHTER!
F. F. FANS
LOOK! THERE THEY ARE! UP ON THE SECOND FLOOR LANDING!
WE'VE GOT TO SLIP OUT SOMEHOW! IF THEY CATCH US, WE'LL ALL BE LATE FOR OUR APPOINTMENTS!
I WONDER IF I COULD TALK THE MAYOR INTO DECLARIN' OPEN SEASON ON THE YANCY STREETERS --JUST FOR ONE RIP-SNORTIN' DAY!
PSSST! OVER HERE! YOU CAN USE THE FREIGHT ELEVATOR AND GET OUT THE SERVICE EXIT!
WE'RE IN LUCK! IT'S ONE OF THE JANITORS!
FIRST TIME I EVER STOOD SO CLOSE TO FOUR CELEBRITIES! I'D HAVE SPOTTED YOU ANYWHERE!
AND THE THING THOUGHT HE WAS HIDDEN BEHIND THOSE CHEATERS HE WEARS!
HE DIDN'T RECOGNIZE MY FACE, KIDDO-- IT'S MY LOVABLE PERSONALITY THAT SHINES OUT LIKE A BEACON!
5


I'D SURE APPRECIATE IT IF I COULD SHAKE HANDS WITH YOU ALL BEFORE YOU GO!
SURE, OLD FELLA! BUT DON'T SQUEEZE ME TOO HARD! HEH HEH!
IT'S A PLEASURE, SIR! AND THANK YOU FOR HELPING US!
AS THEY LEAVE, NONE OF THE COLORFUL QUARTET NOTICE THAT THE "JANITOR" HAS SECRETLY AFFIXED A TINY, TISSUE-THIN PLASTIC DISC TO EACH OF THEIR HANDS!
IT WORKED LIKE A CHARM --AS ALL MY PLANS DO!
THEN, DASHING INTO A NEARBY BROOM CLOSET, HE REMOVES HIS OVERALLS, CAP, FALSE BEARD, AND FACE MASK...
WITH THOSE SPECIALLY TREATED IDENTO-DISCS ON THEIR HANDS, MY LITTLE "FOLLOWERS" WILL BE ABLE TO TRACK THE FANTASTIC FOUR WHEREVER THEY GO!
AND NOW, I'LL RETURN TO MY HIDDEN LAB TO PUT PHASE ONE OF MY MASTER PLAN INTO OPERATION! THIS TIME NOTHING SHALL STOP ME FROM DEFEATING THE FANTASTIC FOUR--AS ONLY DOCTOR DOOM CAN!
A SHORT TIME LATER...
GO, MY FOLLOWERS! I RELEASE YOU TO DO THE JOB FOR WHICH I CREATED YOU!
EACH OF YOU LIGHTER-THAN-AIR ROBOTS ARE ATTUNED TO ONE SPECIAL DISC--NOW FIND YOUR OBJECTIVES!
AND SO...
GOSH, HELEN, I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SAY YES TO A DATE WITH ME!
WELL, I'LL ADMIT I WAS A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT GOING OUT WITH THE FAMOUS HUMAN TORCH, JOHNNY! BUT NOW I'M GLAD WE'RE TOGETHER!
THAT GOES DOUBLE FOR ME, DOLL-FACE! SAY, HERE'S MY FAVORITE PARKING PLACE! WOULD YOU LOOK AND SEE IF I HAVE SOMETHING IN MY EYE?
JOHNNY STORM! DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU WHAT A FAST WORKER YOU--22 JOHNNY!! WHAT'S THAT??!!
HUH? WHAT'S WHA--???
BLAZIN' BEARCATS!! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT THING IS, BUT DON'T WORRY, HONEY, I'LL GET RID OF IT!
FLAME ON!
HEY! WHAT THE--22! I FLEW RIGHT THRU IT!
IF THIS IS YOUR IDEA OF A FUN-EVENING, JOHNNY STORM, IT ISN'T MINE! I'M WALKING HOME! GOODBYE FOREVER!
6.

AND, AT THE SAME TIME, IN ANOTHER PLACE...
HA HA! BOY, AS IF THE THING ISN'T CONSPICUOUS-LOOKING ENOUGH--
HE'S GOT HIS OWN PERSONAL FLOATING WATCH-DOG TRAILING AFTER HIM!
BEN, WHAT IS IT? WHY IS EVERYONE LAUGHING AT YOU?
I'LL TELL YA, LATER, ALICIA BABY! RIGHT NOW, I'M GONNA DEMOLISH ME A FLYIN' WISE-GUY!
TRY TO MAKE A LAUGHIN'-STOCK OUTTA THE THING, WILL YA?? WELL, THIS'LL TAKE THE WIND OUTTA YOUR SAILS,!!!
HEY! I SLAMMED RIGHT THRU' IM,!! HE ISN'T EVEN SOLID,!! HE'S SOME KINDA GHOST OR SOMETHIN'!!!
AS FOR SUE STORM, SHE HAS A MORE DECORATIVE FOLLOWER FOR HERSELF...
HOLD IT, MISS STORM! BEFORE WE SNAP YOU FOR THIS U.S. SAVINGS BOND POSTER, YOU'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF THAT THING ABOVE YOU!
GOOD HEAVENS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT I CAN'T SHAKE IT! IT FOLLOWS WHEREVER I GO!
THIS IS TERRIBLE! EVEN THOUGH I'VE TURNED INVISIBLE, IT'S STILL FOLLOWING ME! BUT HOW-- WHY--??
AND, IN A DIGNIFIED LECTURE HALL, NOT FAR AWAY...
IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO CONFER UPON REED RICHARDS THE HONORARY DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF--
ULP! WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT.??!
DOCTOR RICHARDS,!! WE ALL KNOW HOW BRILLIANT YOU ARE AT DEVISING COLORFUL SCIENTIFIC EFFECTS--BUT I HARDLY THINK THAT THIS IS THE PROPER TIME OR PLACE...
FORGIVE ME, SIR! I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH-- WITH WHATEVER THAT IS,!!
WELL, LITTLE FRIEND, YOU RUINED MY EVENING, LOST ME AN HONORARY DEGREE, AND I STILL CAN'T LOSE YOU! BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT--KEEP FOLLOWING TO MY LAB! I HAVE A HUNCH WHAT YOU ARE, AND WHO DESIGNED YOU!
IMPERIAL CAB
7

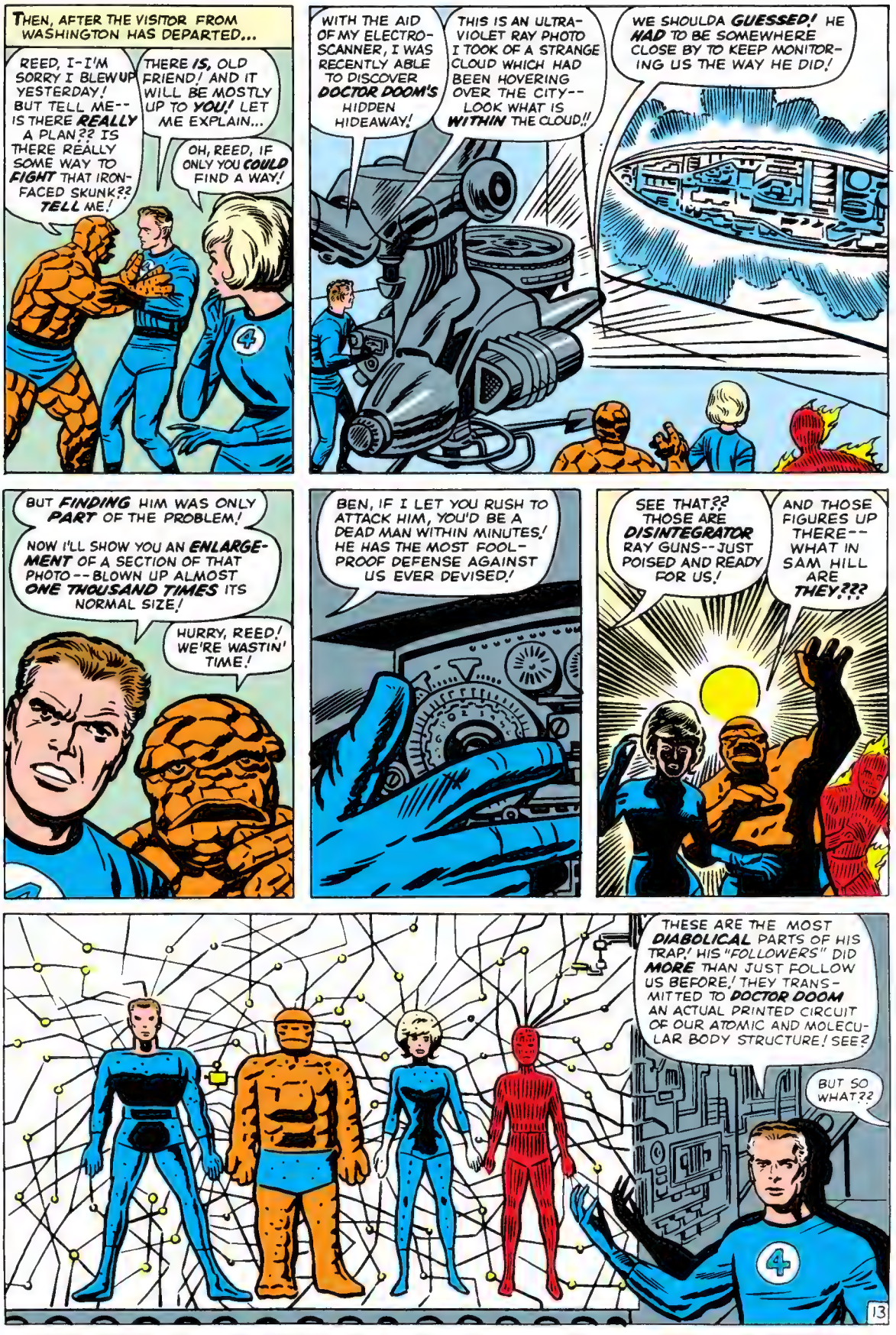

FINALLY, AT THE WORLD-FAMOUS HEADQUARTERS OF THE GREATEST SUPER-TEAM MANKIND HAS EVER KNOWN...
CALM DOWN, EVERYONE! I HAVE A LITTLE GADGET HERE WHICH WILL SOON TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THESE FLOATING "FOLLOWERS"!
ALL I WANNA KNOW IS HOW I CAN LAND JUST ONE HEALTHY PUNCH AT THAT FLYIN' FREAK ABOVE ME!
ME TOO! THE BLAMED THING RUINED A DATE I'VE BEEN PROMOTIN' FOR WEEKS!
THERE! I MODIFIED THIS ELECTRO-DETECTOR TO ZERO IN ON WHATEVER IS ATTRACTING THE "FOLLOWERS" TO US! SEE? IT'S POINTING AT MY WRIST!
BIG DEAL! WHATCHA TRYIN' TO PROVE?? THAT YA GOT ATTRACTIVE WRISTS??
OH HUSH, BEN! LET REED FINISH!
BEEEEEEEPPPPP!
HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN SEEKING! THIS TINY PLASTIC DISC! LOOK AT YOUR WRISTS, TOO--I'LL WAGER YOU'VE EACH GOT ONE!
YOU'RE RIGHT! BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I KNEW THE "FOLLOWERS" WERE JUST INANIMATE THINGS WITH NO LIFE OF THEIR OWN! THEY HAD TO BE ATTRACTED BY SOMETHING--AND THESE LITTLE DISCS ACTED LIKE MAGNETS, KEEPING THEM WITH US!
YOU'RE RIGHT, BIG DADDY! I BRUSHED THAT BLAMED DISC OFF, AND LOOK--
IT'S FADIN' AWAY!
THEY WON'T BOTHER US ANY MORE! WITHOUT THE DISCS TO SUMMON THEM, THEY'LL SIMPLY FADE AWAY FOREVER!
WHAT LUNKHEADS WE WERE! THAT PHONY JANITOR MUSTA SLAPPED THOSE DISCS ON US WHEN HE WAS SHAKIN' OUR MITTS!
AND THAT MEANS HE MUST HAVE REALLY BEEN--DOCTOR DOOM!
THEN--FOR ALL WE KNOW, HE'S MONITORING OUR EVERY MOVEMENT RIGHT NOW WITH ONE OF THOSE DIABOLICAL MACHINES OF HIS!!
HOW RIGHT SHE IS!! BUT NOW THE FIRST PHASE OF MY PLAN IS ENDED! I ONLY INTENDED TO EMBARRASS AND CONFUSE THEM!
NOW I SHALL GO TO WORK WITH A VENGEANCE--AND MY FINAL PURPOSE SHALL BE--THEIR COMPLETE DESTRUCTION!
8


WHILE SPYING ON THE ACCURSED THING, I REALIZED THE ONE WAY I CAN DEFEAT THE HATED FOURSOME...
I SHALL STRIKE AT THEM THRU THEIR WEAKEST LINK--THE ONE WHOM THE THING LOVES--THE SIGHTLESS ALICIA!
ALTHOUGH MY BRAIN IS THE EQUAL OF REED RICHARDS' HIMSELF, I TOO HAVE HAD MY ONE WEAK SPOT...
I HAVE NEVER FULLY UNDERSTOOD OTHER HUMAN BEINGS! EVEN NOW, I CANNOT COMPREHEND HOW ONE AS LOVELY AS ALICIA CAN FEEL AFFECTION FOR THE GROTESQUE THING!!
HOW IRONIC IT IS THAT EVEN A GARGOYLE SUCH AS THE THING CAN FIND LOVE --EVEN HE CAN MINGLE WITH NORMAL PEOPLE!
AND YET, I--AND I ALONE, DARE NOT EXPOSE MY FACE TO THE VIEW OF OTHER HUMANS! I ALONE MUST HIDE LIKE A DARK WRAITH FROM THE SIGHT OF MY FELLOW MAN!
BUT I SHALL HAVE MY REVENGE --UPON THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE--BEGINNING WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR! AND STARTING--NOW!
SUDDENLY, WITHOUT WARNING, AT THE FLICK OF A SWITCH FROM DOCTOR DOOM'S MASTER CONTROL PANEL, A STRANGE GRAPPLER RAY DRIFTS TO THE SPOT WHERE THE GENTLE ALICIA IS WALKING THRU THE STREET, AND THEN--
WHAT--IS HAPPENING TO ME??
I SEEM TO BE WALKING ON AIR!! I FEEL AS THOUGH I'M BEING LIFTED UPWARD--INTO THE SKY!! BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT CANNOT BE!
HOWEVER, FEW THINGS ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO ONE WHO IS A MASTER OF SCIENCE... AND, SECONDS LATER, THE ASTONISHED GIRL PASSES THRU WHAT SEEMS TO BE A FLOATING CLOUD WHEN VIEWED FROM EARTH--BUT IN REALITY, IS THE HIDING PLACE FOR DOCTOR DOOM'S INCREDIBLE FLOATING LABORATORY!
CLOSER--JUST A LITTLE CLOSER, AND MY TRAP WILL HAVE BEEN SPRUNG!


LATER THAT DAY, AS THE THING KEEPS OCCUPIED WITH HIS OWN UNIQUE VERSION OF WEIGHT-LIFTING...
QUICK, BEN--PUT THOSE THINGS DOWN AND LOOK AT THIS PAPER!
IT'S ALICIA!! IT'S MY ALICIA!! IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HER, I'LL--
EASY, OLD FRIEND! THERE MUST BE MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE!
LOOK OUT, REED! BEN LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONNA GO ON THE RAMPAGE!
DAILY HERALD
GIRL WALKS ON AIR IN VIEW OF THOUSANDS!
BYSTANDER'S CAMERA RECORDS UNEXPLAINABLE EVENT!
IT'S DOOM! HE'S BEHIND ALL THIS! HE'S TRYIN' TO GET AT US THRU ALICIA! BUT HE WON'T--! DO YA HEAR?? HE WON'T!! LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
BEN, PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
LET 'IM GO, REED! HE'S GOT EVERY RIGHT TO BE MAD! AND I'M WITH THE BIG FELLA, ALL THE WAY!
SUDDENLY, A GRIM VISAGE APPEARS ON THE GREAT WALL OF THE READY ROOM, AND...
FOOLS! YOUR ANGER WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING! THIS TIME DOCTOR DOOM HOLDS ALL THE CARDS! THIS TIME VICTORY SHALL BE MINE!
IT'S HIM!
FORGIVE ME FOR INTERRUPTING YOU BY SENDING MY PSEUDO-IMAGE HERE, BUT I AM STILL HUMAN ENOUGH TO WISH TO GLOAT OVER YOUR HAPLESS PLIGHT!
BUT NOW, OUR LITTLE GAME BEGINS IN ERNEST! I MUST WARN YOU THAT I WILL TOLORATE NO INTERFERENCE! IF YOU ANGER ME, I MIGHT UNLEASH AN "ILLUSION-RAY" UPON NEW YORK--A RAY WHICH WILL GIVE THE ENTIRE POPULATION MASS HALLUCINATIONS!
"OR, IF YOU PREFER, AT THE FLICK OF A SWITCH, I CAN DROP FAST-GROWING SPORES UPON YOUR UNSUSPECTING CITY, SPORES WHICH CAN GROW INTO GIANT VINES WITHIN MINUTES--VINES WHICH WILL CHOKE OFF ALL TRAFFIC, ALL COMMERCE, THE VERY HEART-BEAT OF THE CITY ITSELF!"
10

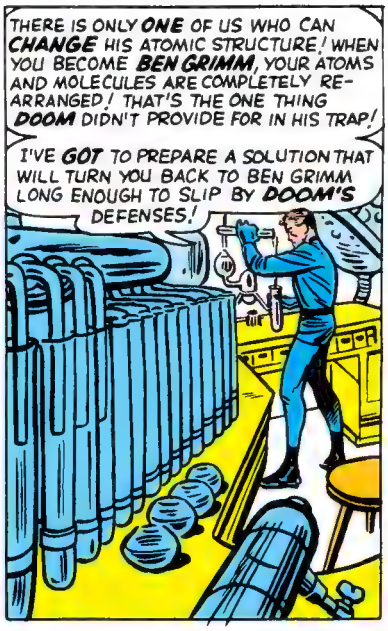
AND NEVER FORGET MY GREATEST THREAT--ALICIA IS NOW MY PRISONER! IF YOU WISH EVER TO SEE HER AGAIN, YOU MUST NOT DARE TO OPPOSE ME! THUS DO I RENDER THE FAMED FANTASTIC FOUR HELPLESS! THUS DOES DOCTOR DOOM BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL OF ALL!
WAIT! WHAT ABOUT ALICIA?? HEY--DON'T FADE AWAY--!!!
DOES HE REALLY THINK HE CAN THREATEN US?? DOES HE THINK ANYTHING WILL STOP ME FROM TRACKING HIM DOWN--FROM RIDDING THE WORLD OF THE THREAT HE POSES??
DON'T SAY THAT, REED! NOT WHILE ALICIA'S HIS PRISONER! YOU MUSTN'T CROSS HIM, DO YA HEAR?!! I WON'T LET YA!
BUT, BEN, DON'T YOU SEE? THIS IS WHAT HE WANTS!! TO TIE OUR HANDS! TO--UGH!
DON'T TRY TO SWEET-TALK ME INTO ANYTHING!! I AINT LETTIN' ALICIA COME TO HARM--NO MATTER WHAT!!
POW!
HA! I AM TRIUMPHANT EVEN BEYOND MY WILDEST HOPES! THEY ARE FIGHTING AMONGST THEMSELVES! SO, I SHALL LET THEM A WHILE LONGER--LET THEM TREMBLE AT MY NEXT MOVE--AS THE WORLD SHALL SOON TREMBLE!
FOR IT IS NOT MONEY I SEEK--NOT PERSONAL GAIN! WITH MY GENIUS, I CAN MAKE FORTUNES EASILY AS OTHERS MAKE PENNIES! NO, WHAT I CRAVE IS POWER! AND THAT IS WHAT I SHALL HAVE!
I SHALL SEND THIS SPECIALLY-PREPARED TAPE TO WASHINGTON, OUTLINING MY DEMANDS!
ACTUALLY, MY TERMS ARE MODEST FOR ONE AS POWERFUL AS I! ALL I INSIST UPON IS A POST IN THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET! IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT A MAN OF MY ABILITY HAVE AT LEAST CABINET RANK IN THE GOVERNMENT!
AND SO...NOT LONG AFTERWARDS...
IT'S ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE! HE ACTUALLY THREATENS US WITH WAR IF HIS TERMS ARE NOT MET!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, SIR, THAT ONE MAN HAS THREATENED TO DECLARE WAR ON AN ENTIRE NATION!
NO MATTER WHAT WEAPONS HE MAY HAVE AT HIS DISPOSAL, WE CAN NEVER ALLOW THIS NATION TO BE DICTATATED TO BY ONE SINISTER MAN--NOT EVEN SO POWERFUL A MAN AS DOCTOR DOOM!
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO! WE MUST SHOW HIM THAT THE UNITED STATES CANNOT BE THREATENED BY ANYONE! WE MUST MOVE FORWARD AND PROCEED WITH GREAT VIGOR! AND NOW, GENTLEMEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, IT'S CAROLINE'S BEDTIME!

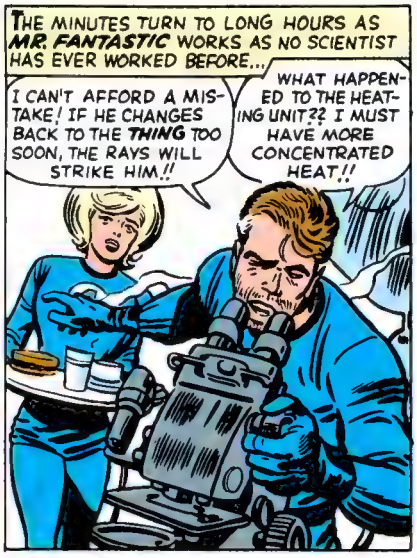
THE NEXT DAY, NOT RECEIVING THE ANSWER HE DESIRED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE, DOCTOR DOOM BEGINS HIS ONE-MAN WAR! IN FACTORIES AND LABORATORIES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY--
SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH ALL THE ELECTRONIC MACHINES! THEY'VE GONE HAYWIRE!
BLINK BLINK
WEEEEEEEEE
AMERICA'S DEFENSIVE MISSILES, GUIDED BY COMPLEX ELECTRONIC BRAINS, SUDDENLY GO OUT OF CONTROL...
THE SAME THING IS HAPPENING TO EVERY MISSILE THRUOUT THE COUNTRY! IT'S UNCANNY!
IT'S AS THOUGH SOME EVIL GENIUS HAS TAMPERED WITH EVERY ELECTRICAL DEVICE IN THE NATION!
WITHIN HOURS, EVERY MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD IS AFFECTED, AS FACTORIES ARE SHUT DOWN DUE TO FAILURES IN MECHANICAL GUIDANCE CONTROLS AND AUTOMATED SAFETY DEVICES! ALMOST OVERNIGHT, THE MIGHTY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX OF AMERICA SEEMS TO GRIND TO A HALT!
YOU GOTTA GET THOSE MACHINES FIXED!! WE WANT OUR JOBS BACK!!
CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
THE NEWS TRAVELS QUICKLY-- TO BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN...
DA! IT IS THE BEST NEWS WE HAVE HEARD IN WEEKS!
SOON THE CAPITALISTIC COUNTRIES WILL BE HELPLESS BEFORE US!
STOP GLOATING, YOU NUMBSKULLS! DOCTOR DOOM IS NOT DOING THIS FOR US! FOR ALL WE KNOW, HE MAY STRIKE HERE NEXT!
IF HE IS ABLE TO WRECK THE AMERICAN ELECTRONIC SYSTEM, WHY SHOULD HE NOT BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME TO OURS??
YOU ARE RIGHT, COMRADE K! I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT!
DA! THAT IS WHY YOU WILL NEVER BE DICTATOR!
AND, IN NEW YORK, THE FANTASTIC FOUR RECEIVE A GRIM-FACED, BROODING VISITOR!
AND SO, THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF FELT THAT INASMUCH AS YOU FOUR HAD BATTLED DR. DOOM IN THE PAST, AND DEFEATED HIM, YOU MIGHT BE THE BEST CHOICE TO--
WE UNDERSTAND, COLONEL! WE'RE PREPARED TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY!
SURE! WHATEVER DOOM CAN DO, MR. FANTASTIC CAN DO A HECKUVA LOT BETTER!
TALK, TALK, TALK, WHILE POOR ALICIA IS STILL HIS PRISONER!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, SIR, I HAVE ALREADY FORMULATED A PLAN OF ATTACK AGAINST OUR MUTUAL ENEMY!
OH? AND MAY I KNOW WHAT IT IS?
SORRY, COLONEL! IT WILL BE SAFER IF NOBODY BUT THE FOUR OF US KNOW ABOUT IT!
12

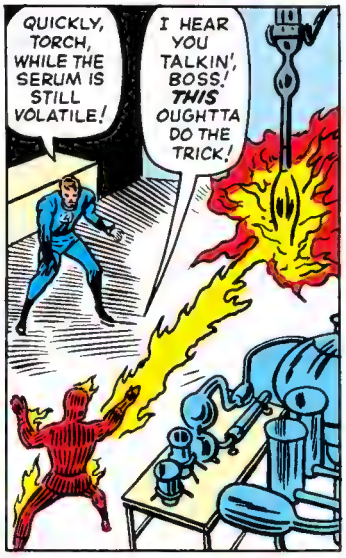

THEN, AFTER THE VISITOR FROM WASHINGTON HAS DEPARTED...
REED, I-I'M SORRY I BLEW UP YESTERDAY! BUT TELL ME--IS THERE REALLY A PLAN?? IS THERE REALLY SOME WAY TO FIGHT THAT IRON-FACED SKUNK?? TELL ME!
THERE IS, OLD FRIEND! AND IT WILL BE MOSTLY UP TO YOU! LET ME EXPLAIN...
OH, REED, IF ONLY YOU COULD FIND A WAY!
WITH THE AID OF MY ELECTRO-SCANNER, I WAS RECENTLY ABLE TO DISCOVER DOCTOR DOOM'S HIDDEN HIDEAWAY!
THIS IS AN ULTRA-VIOLET RAY PHOTO I TOOK OF A STRANGE CLOUD WHICH HAD BEEN HOVERING OVER THE CITY--LOOK WHAT IS WITHIN THE CLOUD!!
WE SHOULDA GUESSED! HE HAD TO BE SOMEWHERE CLOSE BY TO KEEP MONITORING US THE WAY HE DID!
BUT FINDING HIM WAS ONLY PART OF THE PROBLEM!
NOW I'LL SHOW YOU AN ENLARGEMENT OF A SECTION OF THAT PHOTO--BLOWN UP ALMOST ONE THOUSAND TIMES ITS NORMAL SIZE!
HURRY, REED! WE'RE WASTIN' TIME!
BEN, IF I LET YOU RUSH TO ATTACK HIM, YOU'D BE A DEAD MAN WITHIN MINUTES! HE HAS THE MOST FOOL-PROOF DEFENSE AGAINST US EVER DEVISED!
SEE THAT?? THOSE ARE DISINTEGRATOR RAY GUNS--JUST POISED AND READY FOR US!
AND THOSE FIGURES UP THERE--WHAT IN SAM HILL ARE THEY???
THESE ARE THE MOST DIABOLICAL PARTS OF HIS TRAP! HIS "FOLLOWERS" DID MORE THAN JUST FOLLOW US BEFORE! THEY TRANSMITTED TO DOCTOR DOOM AN ACTUAL PRINTED CIRCUIT OF OUR ATOMIC AND MOLECULAR BODY STRUCTURE! SEE?
BUT SO WHAT??
13

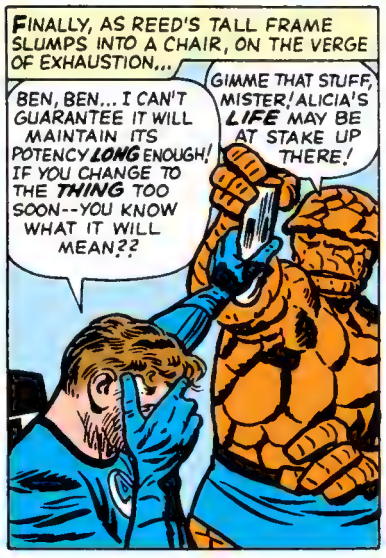
DON'T YOU SEE? HE'S GOT THOSE CIRCUITS CONNECTED TO THE DISINTEGRATOR RAYS!! THERE IS NO WAY WE COULD SLIP PAST THE RAYS WITHOUT THE VERY ATOMIC STRUCTURE OF OUR BODIES TRIGGERING OUR OWN DESTRUCTION!
THEN--IT'S HOPELESS! BUT, YOU SAID YOU HAD A WAY--??

I DO! AND THE WHOLE THING DEPENDS ON YOU!
HOW? FOR THE LOVE OF PETE, SPILL IT, WILLYA??!

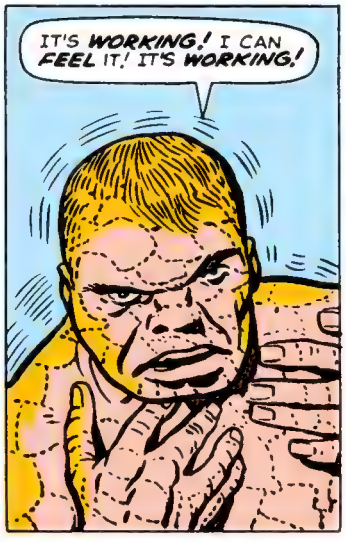

THERE IS ONLY ONE OF US WHO CAN CHANGE HIS ATOMIC STRUCTURE! WHEN YOU BECOME BEN GRIMM, YOUR ATOMS AND MOLECULES ARE COMPLETELY REARRANGED! THAT'S THE ONE THING DOOM DIDN'T PROVIDE FOR IN HIS TRAP!
I'VE GOT TO PREPARE A SOLUTION THAT WILL TURN YOU BACK TO BEN GRIMM LONG ENOUGH TO SLIP BY DOOM'S DEFENSES!


THE MINUTES TURN TO LONG HOURS AS MR. FANTASTIC WORKS AS NO SCIENTIST HAS EVER WORKED BEFORE...
I CAN'T AFFORD A MISTAKE! IF HE CHANGES BACK TO THE THING TOO SOON, THE RAYS WILL STRIKE HIM!!
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HEATING UNIT?? I MUST HAVE MORE CONCENTRATED HEAT!!

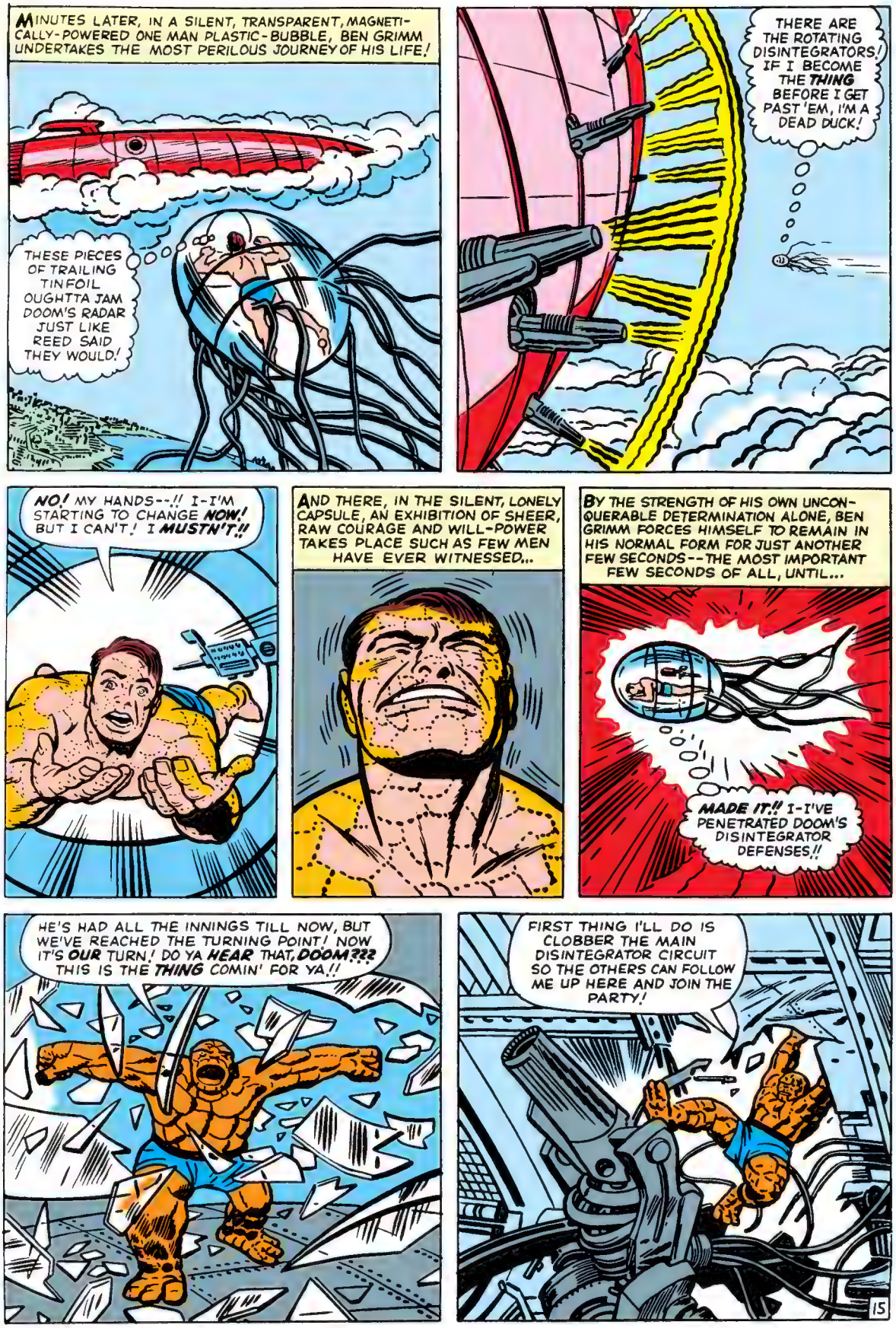

QUICKLY, TORCH, WHILE THE SERUM IS STILL VOLATILE!
I HEAR YOU TALKIN', BOSS! THIS OUGHTTA DO THE TRICK!


FINALLY, AS REED'S TALL FRAME SLUMPS INTO A CHAIR, ON THE VERGE OF EXHAUSTION...
BEN, BEN... I CAN'T GUARANTEE IT WILL MAINTAIN ITS POTENCY LONG ENOUGH! IF YOU CHANGE TO THE THING TOO SOON--YOU KNOW WHAT IT WILL MEAN??
GIMME THAT STUFF, MISTER! ALICIA'S LIFE MAY BE AT STAKE UP THERE!

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, REED, I KNOW YOU TRIED YOUR BEST! AND IF MY LIFE'S GOTTA DEPEND ON SOMEONE, I'D RATHER IT BE YOU THAN ANYONE I KNOW, YA OLD HOUND DOG!
WELL, BOTTOMS UP, KIDDIES!


IT'S WORKING! I CAN FEEL IT! IT'S WORKING!

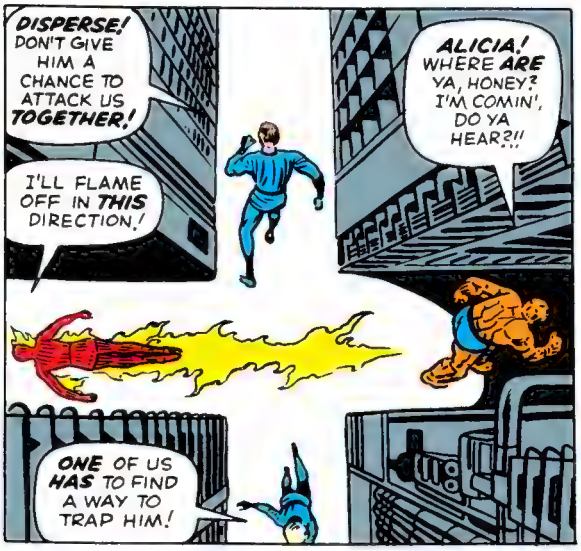
I KNEW IT WOULD, BEN GRIMM! THE ONLY QUESTION NOW IS--FOR HOW LONG???

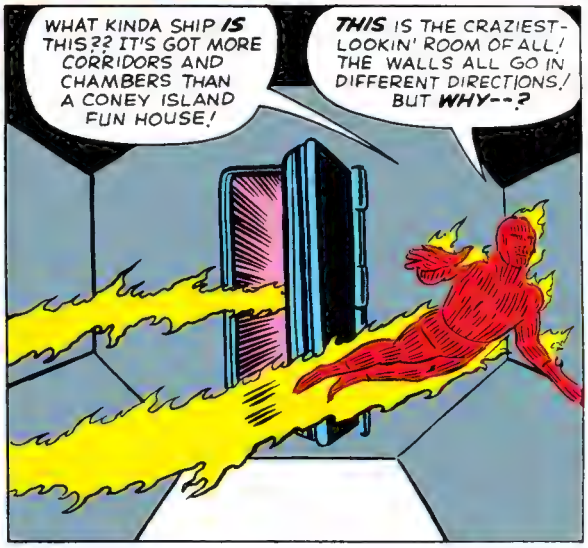

MINUTES LATER, IN A SILENT, TRANSPARENT, MAGNETICALLY-POWERED ONE MAN PLASTIC-BUBBLE, BEN GRIMM UNDERTAKES THE MOST PERILOUS JOURNEY OF HIS LIFE!
THESE PIECES OF TRAILING TINFOIL OUGHTTA JAM DOOM'S RADAR JUST LIKE REED SAID THEY WOULD!
THERE ARE THE ROTATING DISINTEGRATORS! IF I BECOME THE THING BEFORE I GET PAST 'EM, I'M A DEAD DUCK!
NO! MY HANDS--!! I-I'M STARTING TO CHANGE NOW! BUT I CAN'T! I MUSTN'T!!
AND THERE, IN THE SILENT, LONELY CAPSULE, AN EXHIBITION OF SHEER, RAW COURAGE AND WILL-POWER TAKES PLACE SUCH AS FEW MEN HAVE EVER WITNESSED...
BY THE STRENGTH OF HIS OWN UNCONQUERABLE DETERMINATION ALONE, BEN GRIMM FORCES HIMSELF TO REMAIN IN HIS NORMAL FORM FOR JUST ANOTHER FEW SECONDS--THE MOST IMPORTANT FEW SECONDS OF ALL, UNTIL...
MADE IT!! I-I'VE PENETRATED DOOM'S DISINTEGRATOR DEFENSES!!
HE'S HAD ALL THE INNINGS TILL NOW, BUT WE'VE REACHED THE TURNING POINT! NOW IT'S OUR TURN! DO YA HEAR THAT, DOOM??? THIS IS THE THING COMIN' FOR YA!!
FIRST THING I'LL DO IS CLOBBER THE MAIN DISINTEGRATOR CIRCUIT SO THE OTHERS CAN FOLLOW ME UP HERE AND JOIN THE PARTY!
15

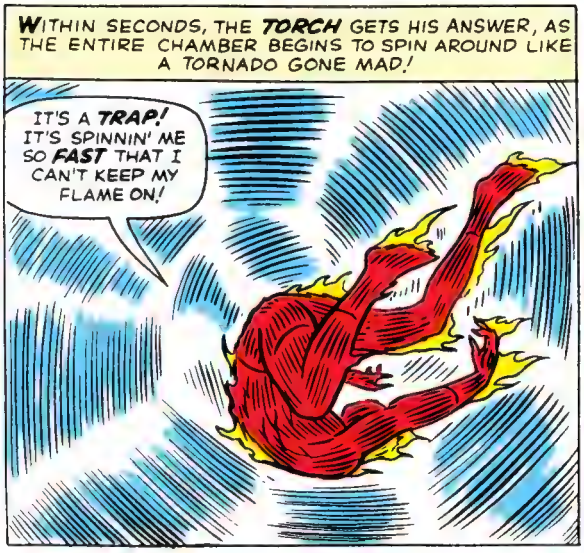
OKAY, KIDS! TIME FOR FUN AND GAMES AGAIN! LET'S GET GOIN'!!!
WE HEAR YA TALKIN', BIG MAN!
BONNGG

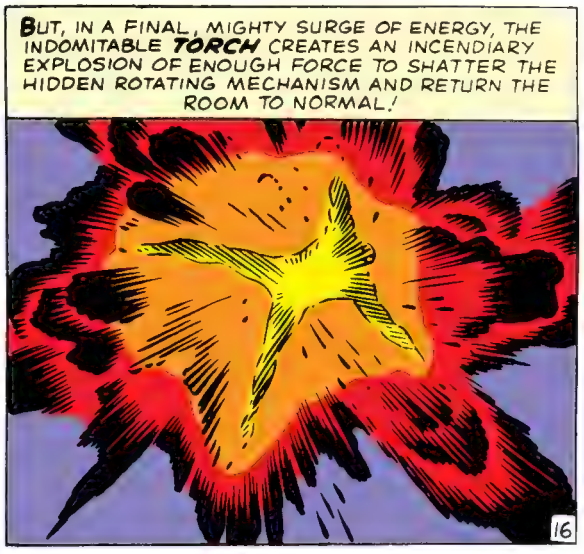
GO EASY NOW! WE'VE ONLY PENETRATED HIS OUTER DEFENSES! DOOM IS STILL A DEADLY MENACE!
NEVER MIND THE LECTURE! WHERE'S ALICIA???

SO! YOU'VE DARED ENTER MY SANCTUM SANCTORUM!! WELL, YOU'LL LIVE TO REGRET IT--ALL OF YOU!

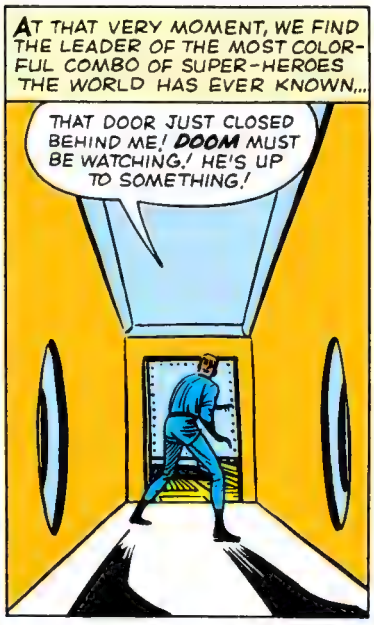

DISPERSE! DON'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO ATTACK US TOGETHER!
I'LL FLAME OFF IN THIS DIRECTION!
ALICIA! WHERE ARE YA, HONEY? I'M COMIN', DO YA HEAR?!!
ONE OF US HAS TO FIND A WAY TO TRAP HIM!


WHAT KINDA SHIP IS THIS?? IT'S GOT MORE CORRIDORS AND CHAMBERS THAN A CONEY ISLAND FUN HOUSE!
THIS IS THE CRAZIEST-LOOKIN' ROOM OF ALL! THE WALLS ALL GO IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS! BUT WHY--?

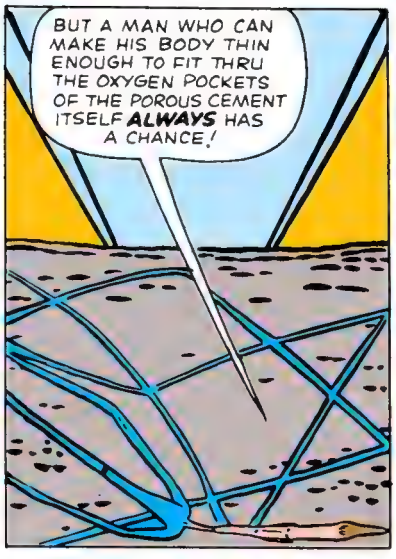

WITHIN SECONDS, THE TORCH GETS HIS ANSWER, AS THE ENTIRE CHAMBER BEGINS TO SPIN AROUND LIKE A TORNADO GONE MAD!
IT'S A TRAP! IT'S SPINNIN' ME SO FAST THAT I CAN'T KEEP MY FLAME ON!


BUT, IN A FINAL, MIGHTY SURGE OF ENERGY, THE INDOMITABLE TORCH CREATES AN INCENDIARY EXPLOSION OF ENOUGH FORCE TO SHATTER THE HIDDEN ROTATING MECHANISM AND RETURN THE ROOM TO NORMAL!

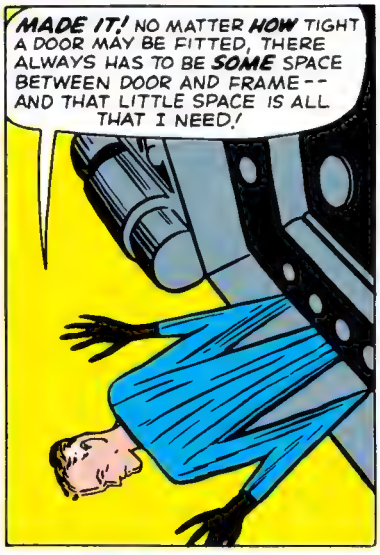
AND SO, WAN AND WEAK, AND JUST BARELY CONSCIOUS, THE HUMAN TORCH LIES IN THE NOW-MOTIONLESS ROOM, WAITING TO REGAIN HIS STRENGTH...
GUESS THIS PUTS ME OUTTA ACTION FOR A FEW MINUTES, BUT DOC DOOM IS STILL GONNA HAVE HIS HANDS FULL WITH MY THREE PARDS!

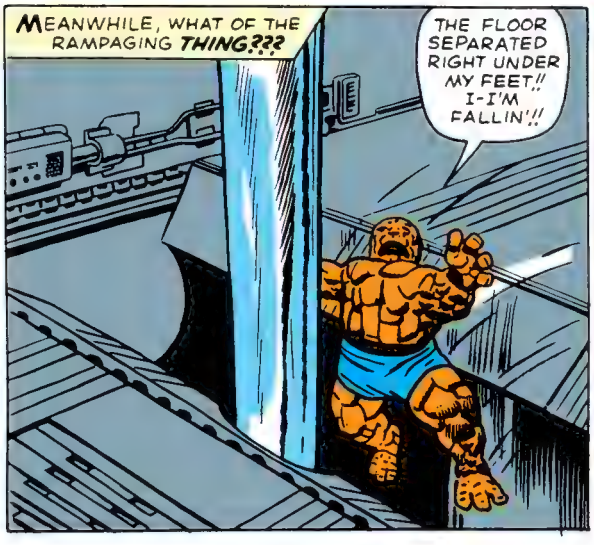

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, WE FIND THE LEADER OF THE MOST COLORFUL COMBO OF SUPER-HEROES THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN...
THAT DOOR JUST CLOSED BEHIND ME! DOOM MUST BE WATCHING! HE'S UP TO SOMETHING!

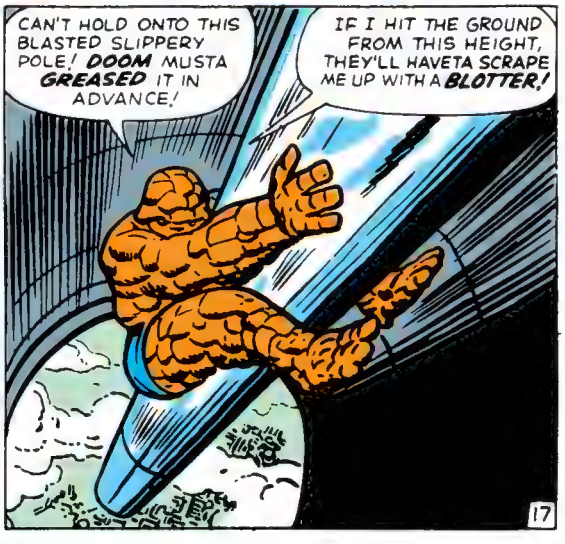
WET CEMENT POURING INTO THE ROOM! HE WAS PREPARED FOR SUCH AN ATTACK!
IT WILL SOLIDIFY IN SECONDS, AND THERE'S NO WAY OUT! --FOR ANY NORMAL HUMAN, THAT IS!

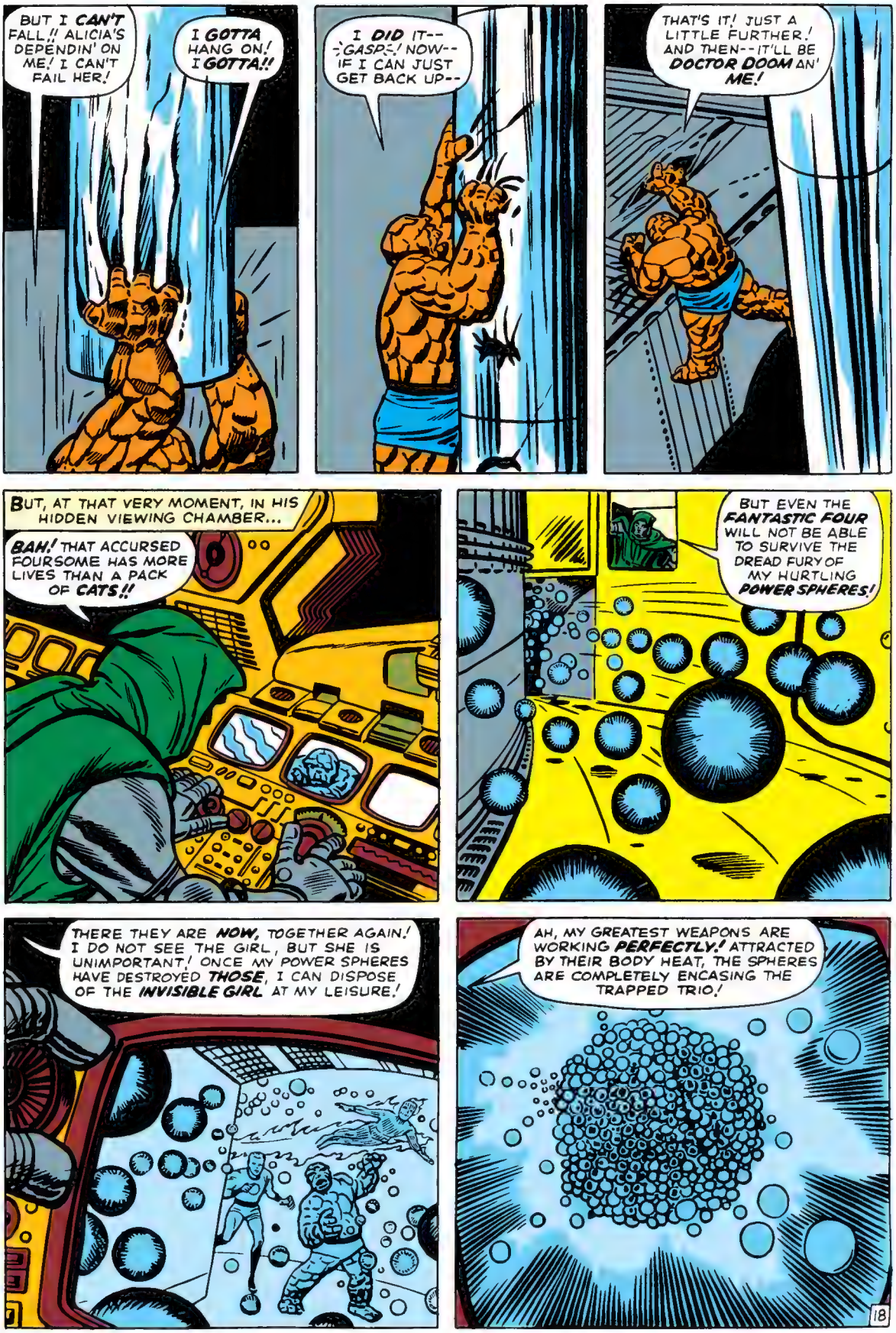

BUT A MAN WHO CAN MAKE HIS BODY THIN ENOUGH TO FIT THRU THE OXYGEN POCKETS OF THE POROUS CEMENT ITSELF ALWAYS HAS A CHANCE!

HAVE TO MOVE FAST! THE POCKETS ARE GROWING SMALLER AND SMALLER!

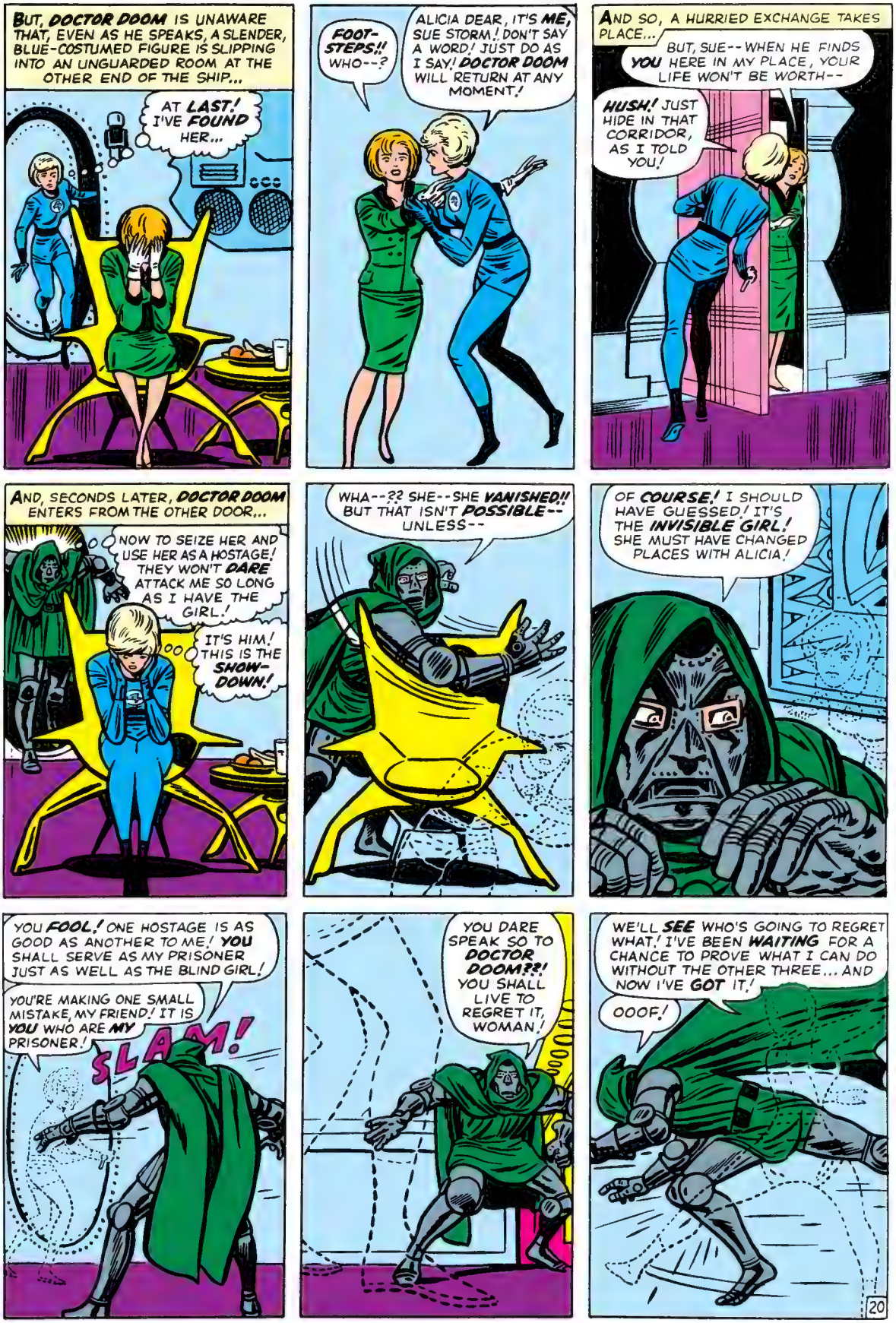

MADE IT! NO MATTER HOW TIGHT A DOOR MAY BE FITTED, THERE ALWAYS HAS TO BE SOME SPACE BETWEEN DOOR AND FRAME -- AND THAT LITTLE SPACE IS ALL THAT I NEED!

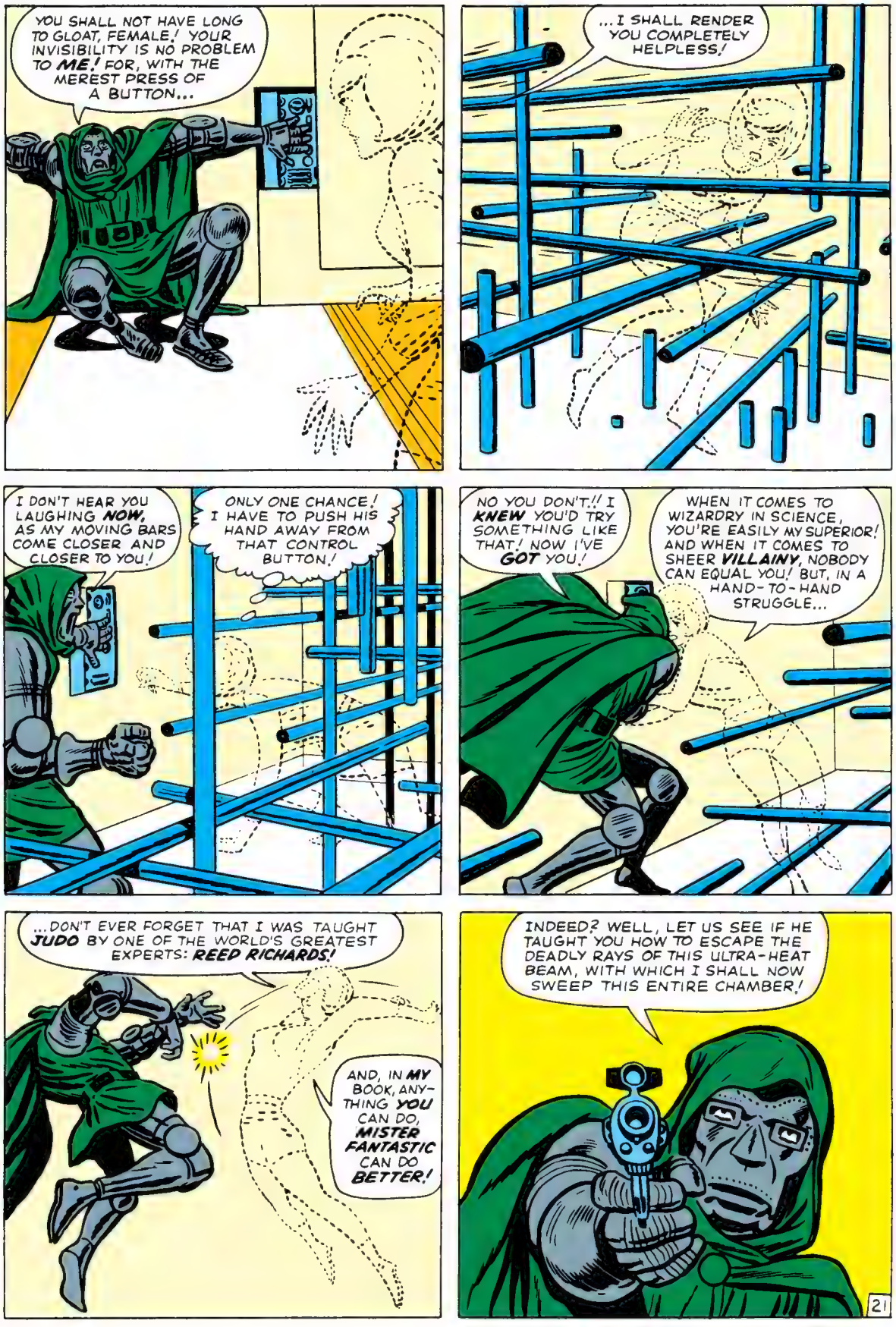

MEANWHILE, WHAT OF THE RAMPAGING THING???
THE FLOOR SEPARATED RIGHT UNDER MY FEET!! I-I'M FALLIN'!!

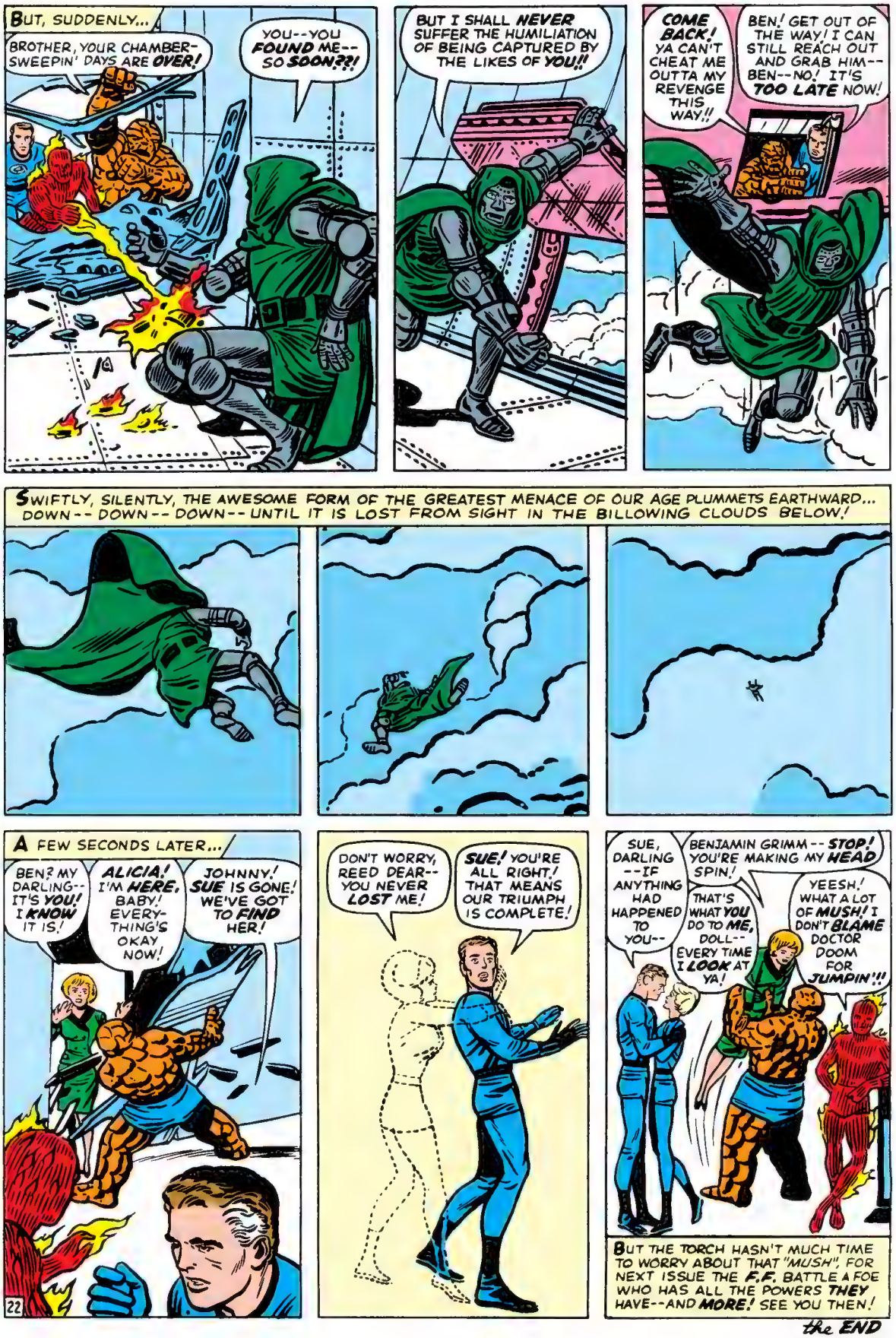

CAN'T HOLD ONTO THIS BLASTED SLIPPERY POLE! DOOM MUSTA GREASED IT IN ADVANCE!
IF I HIT THE GROUND FROM THIS HEIGHT, THEY'LL HAVETA SCRAPE ME UP WITH A BLOTTER!


BUT I CAN'T FALL!! ALICIA'S DEPENDIN' ON ME! I CAN'T FAIL HER!
I GOTTA HANG ON! I GOTTA!!
I DID IT-- GASP! NOW-- IF I CAN JUST GET BACK UP--
THAT'S IT! JUST A LITTLE FURTHER! AND THEN--IT'LL BE DOCTOR DOOM AN' ME!
BUT, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN HIS HIDDEN VIEWING CHAMBER...
BAH! THAT ACCURSED FOURSOME HAS MORE LIVES THAN A PACK OF CATS!!
BUT EVEN THE FANTASTIC FOUR WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE THE DREAD FURY OF MY HURTLING POWER SPHERES!
THERE THEY ARE NOW, TOGETHER AGAIN! I DO NOT SEE THE GIRL, BUT SHE IS UNIMPORTANT! ONCE MY POWER SPHERES HAVE DESTROYED THOSE, I CAN DISPOSE OF THE INVISIBLE GIRL AT MY LEISURE!
AH, MY GREATEST WEAPONS ARE WORKING PERFECTLY! ATTRACTED BY THEIR BODY HEAT, THE SPHERES ARE COMPLETELY ENCASING THE TRAPPED TRIO!

AND NOW, MY SPHERES ARE SPIRITING THEM INTO ANOTHER DIMENSION-- FROM WHICH THEY CAN NEVER ESCAPE-- TILL THE END OF TIME!
THEY ARE GONE! I HAVE WON! AT LAST! DOCTOR DOOM HAS DEFEATED THE FANTASTIC FOUR!!
BUT SUDDENLY, THE ENTIRE ROOM IS JARRED BY A TREMENDOUS SHOCK, AND THEN...
WHAT IS IT?? WHAT HAS HAPPENED??
WE'LL GIVE YA THREE GUESSES, PRETTY BOY!
THE THING!! NO! NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT CAN'T BE!
WE'RE SECONDS TOO LATE! HE SWITCHED ON HIS FORCE SCREEN!
BUT HE CAN'T STAY BEHIND IT FOREVER! AND WHEN HE COMES OUT--WE'LL STILL BE HERE!
BLAST THE LUCK! IT'S COMPLETELY FIRE-PROOF!
BUT HOW--HOW DID YOU FOUR RETURN FROM THE DIMENSION MY POWER SPHERES BROUGHT YOU TO?
WE'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU, DADDY-O! THOSE SPHERES DIDN'T TAKE US ANYWHERE!
YOU JUST WASTED THEM ON THREE FLAME IMAGES OF US! EVER SEE ME MAKE A FLAME IMAGE? WATCH--
HERE'S ONE I CAN MAKE OF YOU! PRETTY GOOD FOR A GUY WHO NEVER WENT TO ART SCHOOL, HUH?
YOU SEE, WE FIGURED YOU WERE PLANNIN' TO TOSS SOMETHING ELSE AT US, SO WE THOUGHT WE'D TURN THE TABLES! DIG?
THAT'S ENOUGH TALKIN', KID! I WANNA KNOW WHERE ALICIA IS--AND I WANNA KNOW NOW!!
NEVER! SHE'LL REMAIN MY PRISONER UNTIL I'VE DISPOSED OF YOU ALL!
19


BUT, DOCTOR DOOM IS UNAWARE THAT, EVEN AS HE SPEAKS, A SLENDER, BLUE-COSTUMED FIGURE IS SLIPPING INTO AN UNGUARDED ROOM AT THE OTHER END OF THE SHIP...
AT LAST! I'VE FOUND HER...
FOOT-STEPS!! WHO--?
ALICIA DEAR, IT'S ME, SUE STORM! DON'T SAY A WORD! JUST DO AS I SAY! DOCTOR DOOM WILL RETURN AT ANY MOMENT!
AND SO, A HURRIED EXCHANGE TAKES PLACE...
BUT, SUE--WHEN HE FINDS YOU HERE IN MY PLACE, YOUR LIFE WON'T BE WORTH--
HUSH! JUST HIDE IN THAT CORRIDOR, AS I TOLD YOU!
AND, SECONDS LATER, DOCTOR DOOM ENTERS FROM THE OTHER DOOR...
NOW TO SEIZE HER AND USE HER AS A HOSTAGE! THEY WON'T DARE ATTACK ME SO LONG AS I HAVE THE GIRL!
IT'S HIM! THIS IS THE SHOW-DOWN!
WHA--?? SHE--SHE VANISHED!! BUT THAT ISN'T POSSIBLE-- UNLESS--
OF COURSE! I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED! IT'S THE INVISIBLE GIRL! SHE MUST HAVE CHANGED PLACES WITH ALICIA!
YOU FOOL! ONE HOSTAGE IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER TO ME! YOU SHALL SERVE AS MY PRISONER JUST AS WELL AS THE BLIND GIRL!
YOU'RE MAKING ONE SMALL MISTAKE, MY FRIEND! IT IS YOU WHO ARE MY PRISONER!
SLAM!
YOU DARE SPEAK SO TO DOCTOR DOOM?!! YOU SHALL LIVE TO REGRET IT, WOMAN!
WE'LL SEE WHO'S GOING TO REGRET WHAT! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO PROVE WHAT I CAN DO WITHOUT THE OTHER THREE... AND NOW I'VE GOT IT!
OOOF!
20


YOU SHALL NOT HAVE LONG TO GLOAT, FEMALE! YOUR INVISIBILITY IS NO PROBLEM TO ME! FOR, WITH THE MEREST PRESS OF A BUTTON...
...I SHALL RENDER YOU COMPLETELY HELPLESS!
I DON'T HEAR YOU LAUGHING NOW, AS MY MOVING BARS COME CLOSER AND CLOSER TO YOU!
ONLY ONE CHANCE! I HAVE TO PUSH HIS HAND AWAY FROM THAT CONTROL BUTTON!
NO YOU DON'T!! I KNEW YOU'D TRY SOMETHING LIKE THAT! NOW I'VE GOT YOU!
WHEN IT COMES TO WIZARDRY IN SCIENCE, YOU'RE EASILY MY SUPERIOR! AND WHEN IT COMES TO SHEER VILLAINY, NOBODY CAN EQUAL YOU! BUT, IN A HAND-TO-HAND STRUGGLE...
...DON'T EVER FORGET THAT I WAS TAUGHT JUDO BY ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST EXPERTS: REED RICHARDS!
AND, IN MY BOOK, ANYTHING YOU CAN DO, MISTER FANTASTIC CAN DO BETTER!
INDEED? WELL, LET US SEE IF HE TAUGHT YOU HOW TO ESCAPE THE DEADLY RAYS OF THIS ULTRA-HEAT BEAM, WITH WHICH I SHALL NOW SWEEP THIS ENTIRE CHAMBER!
21


BUT, SUDDENLY...
BROTHER, YOUR CHAMBER-SWEEPIN' DAYS ARE OVER!
YOU--YOU FOUND ME--SO SOON??!
BUT I SHALL NEVER SUFFER THE HUMILIATION OF BEING CAPTURED BY THE LIKES OF YOU!!
COME BACK! YA CAN'T CHEAT ME OUTTA MY REVENGE THIS WAY!!
BEN! GET OUT OF THE WAY! I CAN STILL REACH OUT AND GRAB HIM--BEN--NO! IT'S TOO LATE NOW!
SWIFTLY, SILENTLY, THE AWESOME FORM OF THE GREATEST MENACE OF OUR AGE PLUMMETS EARTHWARD... DOWN--DOWN--DOWN--UNTIL IT IS LOST FROM SIGHT IN THE BILLOWING CLOUDS BELOW!
A FEW SECONDS LATER...
BEN? MY DARLING--IT'S YOU! I KNOW IT IS!
ALICIA! I'M HERE, BABY! EVERYTHING'S OKAY NOW!
JOHNNY! SUE IS GONE! WE'VE GOT TO FIND HER!
22
DON'T WORRY, REED DEAR--YOU NEVER LOST ME!
SUE! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! THAT MEANS OUR TRIUMPH IS COMPLETE!
SUE, DARLING--IF ANYTHING HAD HAPPENED TO YOU--
BENJAMIN GRIMM--STOP! YOU'RE MAKING MY HEAD SPIN!
THAT'S WHAT YOU DO TO ME, DOLL--EVERY TIME I LOOK AT YA!
YEESH! WHAT A LOT OF MUSH! I DON'T BLAME DOCTOR DOOM FOR JUMPIN'!!
BUT THE TORCH HASN'T MUCH TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT "MUSH", FOR NEXT ISSUE THE F.F. BATTLE A FOE WHO HAS ALL THE POWERS THEY HAVE--AND MORE! SEE YOU THEN!
the END

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
IND.
Fantastic Four
18 SEPT.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
HE HAS ALL THE POWERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR PLUS STILL MORE! HOW CAN THEY EVER DEFEAT...
THE ALL-POWERFUL SUPER-SKRULL!
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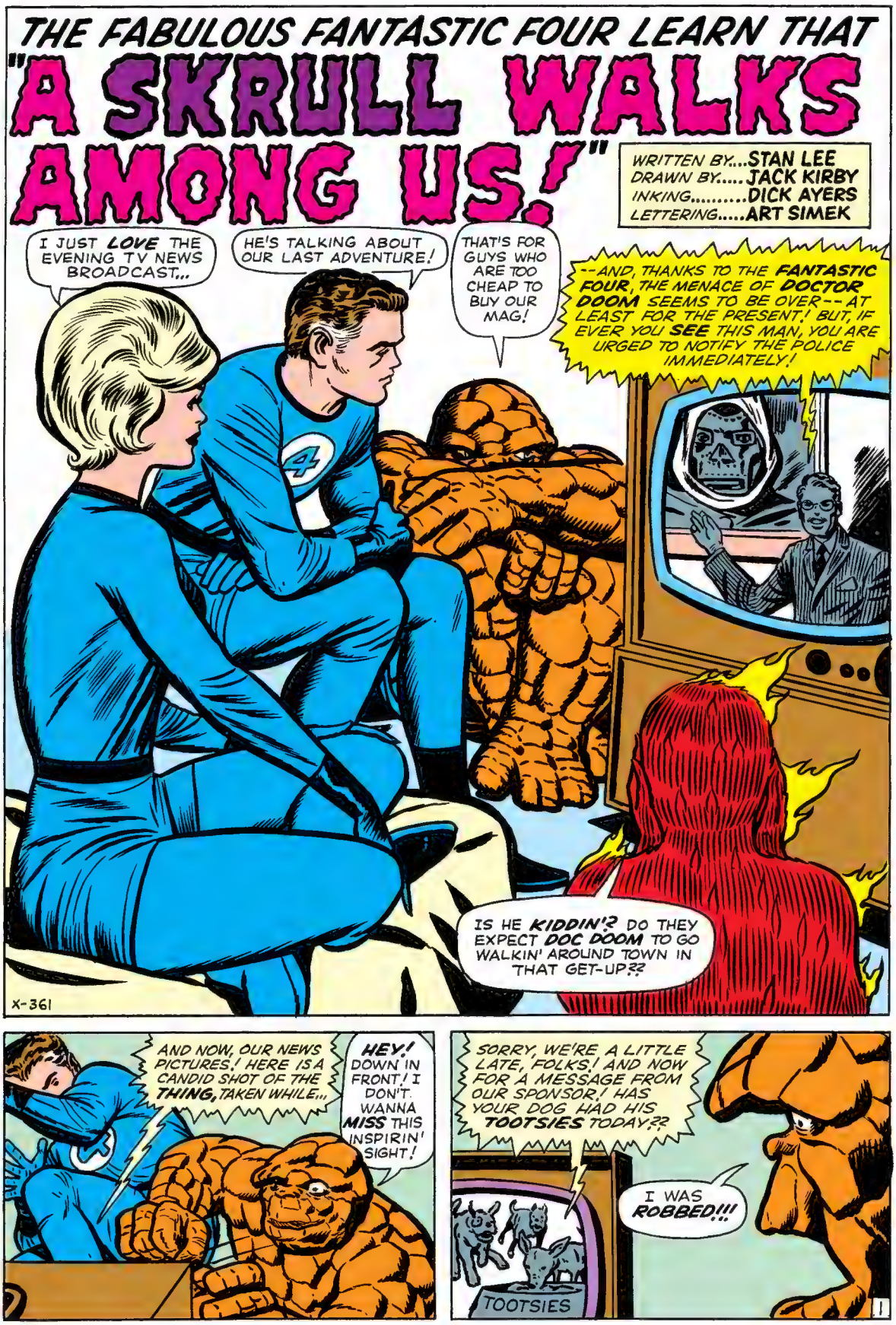
THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR LEARN THAT
"A SKRULL WALKS AMONG US!"
WRITTEN BY....STAN LEE
DRAWN BY.....JACK KIRBY
INKING.....DICK AYERS
LETTERING.....ART SIMEK
I JUST LOVE THE EVENING TV NEWS BROADCAST...
HE'S TALKING ABOUT OUR LAST ADVENTURE!
THAT'S FOR GUYS WHO ARE TOO CHEAP TO BUY OUR MAG!
--AND, THANKS TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR, THE MENACE OF DOCTOR DOOM SEEMS TO BE OVER--AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT.! BUT, IF EVER YOU SEE THIS MAN, YOU ARE URGED TO NOTIFY THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY!
IS HE KIDDIN'? DO THEY EXPECT DOC DOOM TO GO WALKIN' AROUND TOWN IN THAT GET-UP??
X-361
AND NOW, OUR NEWS PICTURES! HERE IS A CANDID SHOT OF THE THING, TAKEN WHILE...
HEY! DOWN IN FRONT! I DON'T WANNA MISS THIS INSPIRIN' SIGHT!
SORRY, WE'RE A LITTLE LATE, FOLKS! AND NOW FOR A MESSAGE FROM OUR SPONSOR! HAS YOUR DOG HAD HIS TOOTSIES TODAY??
I WAS ROBBED!!!
TOOTSIES

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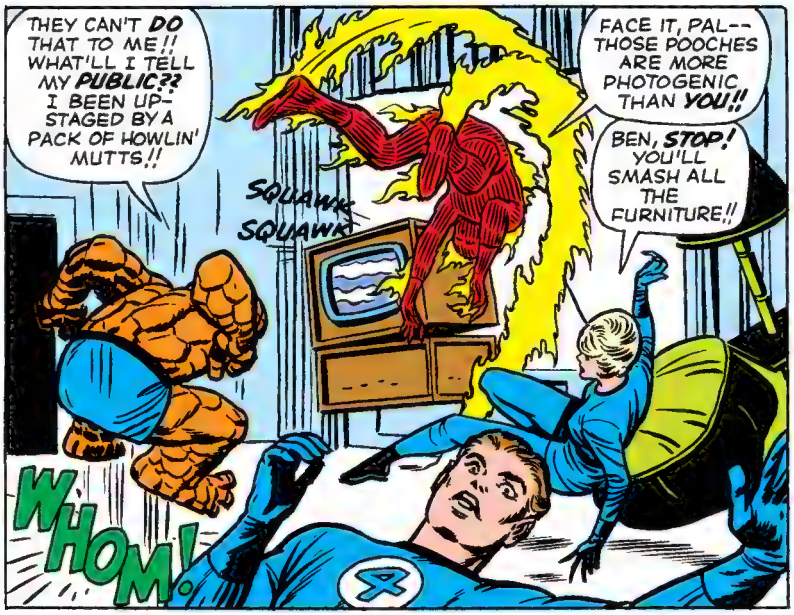
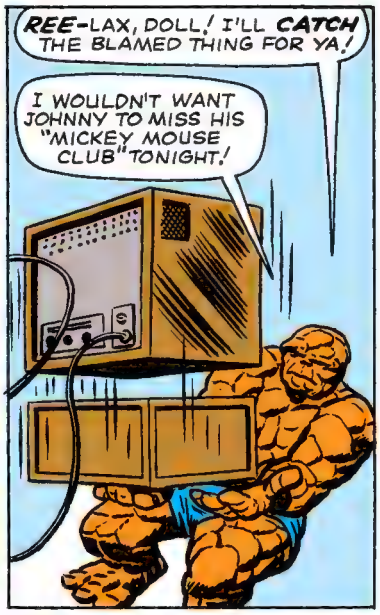
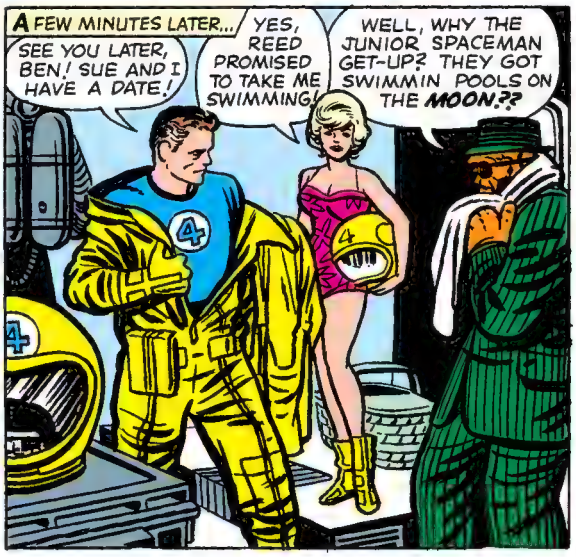
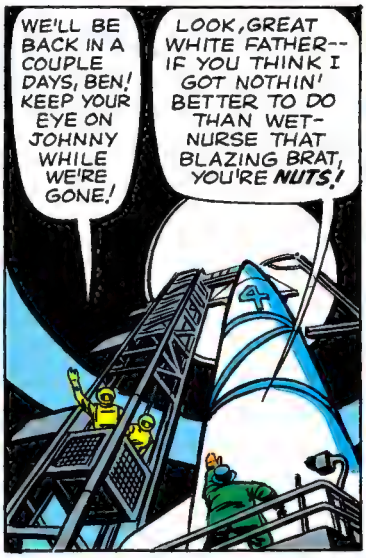

THEY CAN'T DO THAT TO ME!! WHAT'LL I TELL MY PUBLIC?? I BEEN UP-STAGED BY A PACK OF HOWLIN' MUTTS!!
SQUAWK SQUAWK
FACE IT, PAL-- THOSE POOCHES ARE MORE PHOTOGENIC THAN YOU!!
BEN, STOP! YOU'LL SMASH ALL THE FURNITURE!!
WHOM!

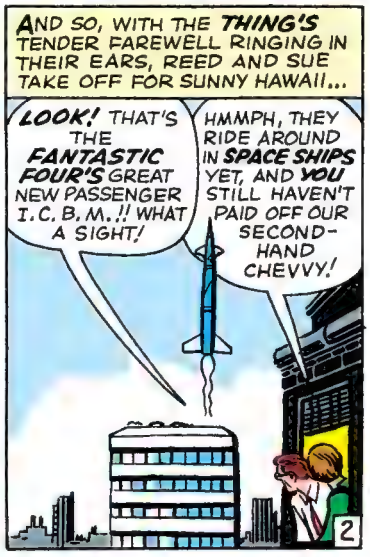

REE-LAX, DOLL! I'LL CATCH THE BLAMED THING FOR YA!
I WOULDN'T WANT JOHNNY TO MISS HIS "MICKEY MOUSE CLUB" TONIGHT!

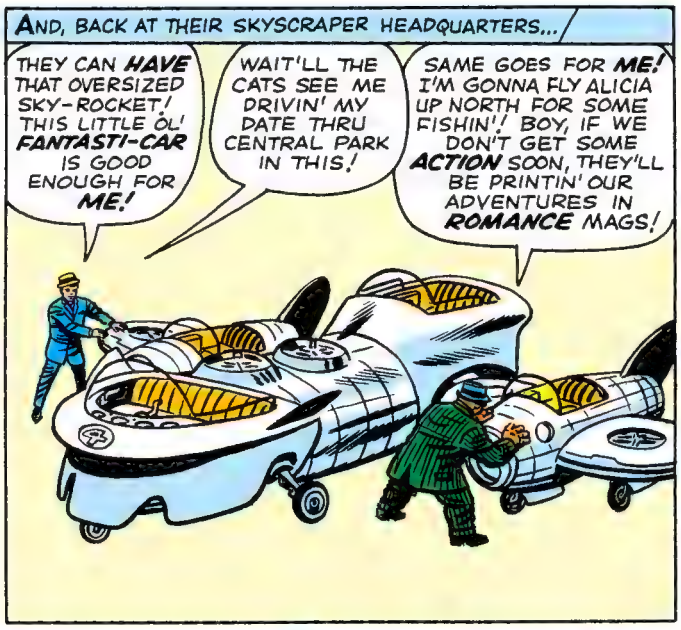
BENJAMIN GRIMM! YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF!
YOU BIG CLOWN, IF WE DIDN'T LOVE YOU SO MUCH...
AND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SENT AWAY FOR A MOUSEKETEER PIN WHEN NO ONE WAS LOOKIN'!
OKAY OKAY! YOU TRYIN' TO GIVE ME AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX ???

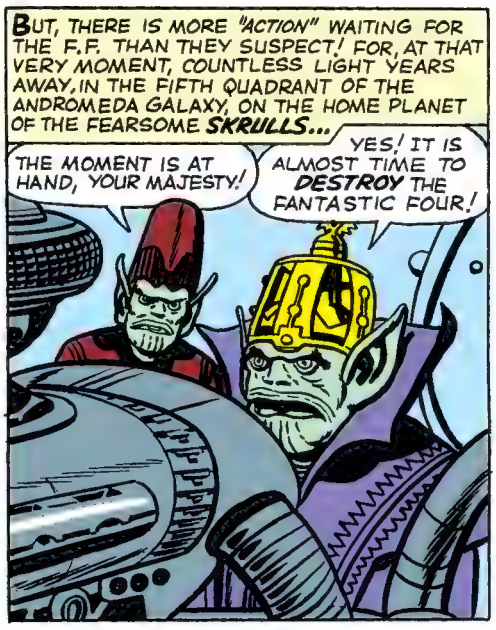

A FEW MINUTES LATER...
SEE YOU LATER, BEN! SUE AND I HAVE A DATE!
YES, REED PROMISED TO TAKE ME SWIMMING!
WELL, WHY THE JUNIOR SPACEMAN GET-UP? THEY GOT SWIMMIN POOLS ON THE MOON??

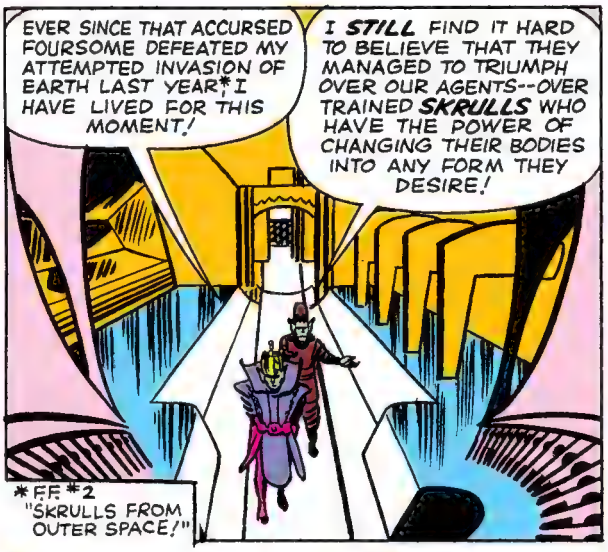
NO, SILLY! WE'RE GOING TO WAIKIKI BEACH IN HAWAII! WE SHOULD BE THERE IN ABOUT A HALF-HOUR!
THAT'S RIGHT! I'VE BEEN WANTING TO GIVE OUR EXPERIMENTAL PASSENGER I.C.B.M.* A WORK-OUT FOR WEEKS-- AND THIS SEEMS LIKE A GOOD TIME TO DO IT!
U.S.
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
*INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTICS MISSILE

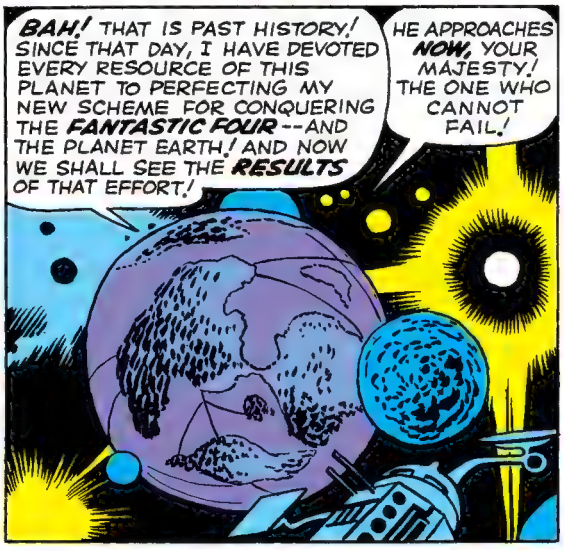

WE'LL BE BACK IN A COUPLE DAYS, BEN! KEEP YOUR EYE ON JOHNNY WHILE WE'RE GONE!
LOOK, GREAT WHITE FATHER-- IF YOU THINK I GOT NOTHIN' BETTER TO DO THAN WET-NURSE THAT BLAZING BRAT, YOU'RE NUTS!

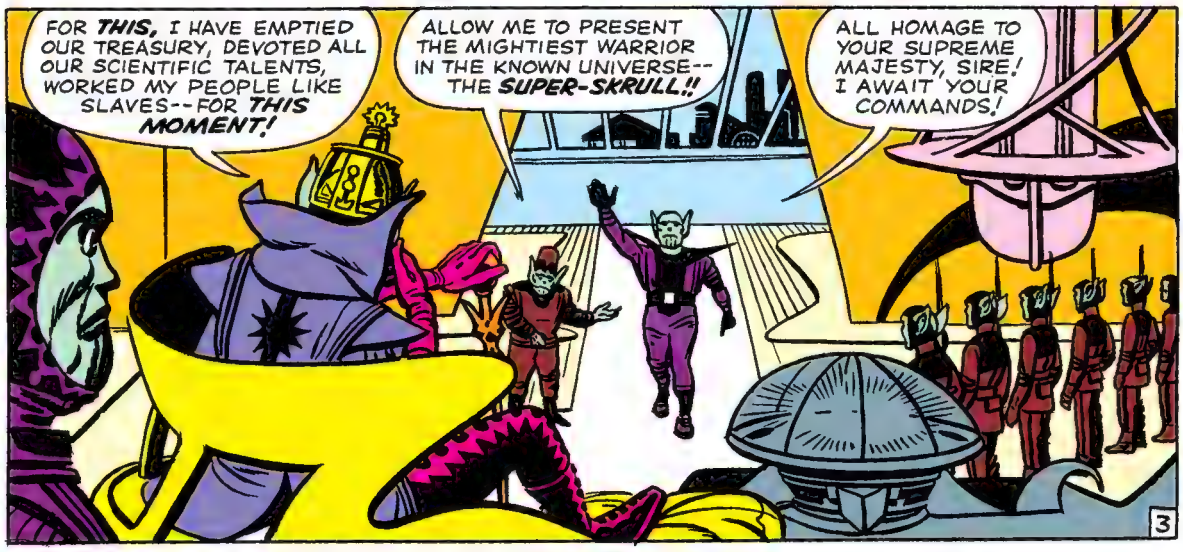

AND SO, WITH THE THING'S TENDER FAREWELL RINGING IN THEIR EARS, REED AND SUE TAKE OFF FOR SUNNY HAWAII...
LOOK! THAT'S THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S GREAT NEW PASSENGER I.C.B.M.!! WHAT A SIGHT!
HMMPH, THEY RIDE AROUND IN SPACE SHIPS YET, AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T PAID OFF OUR SECOND-HAND CHEVVY!
2

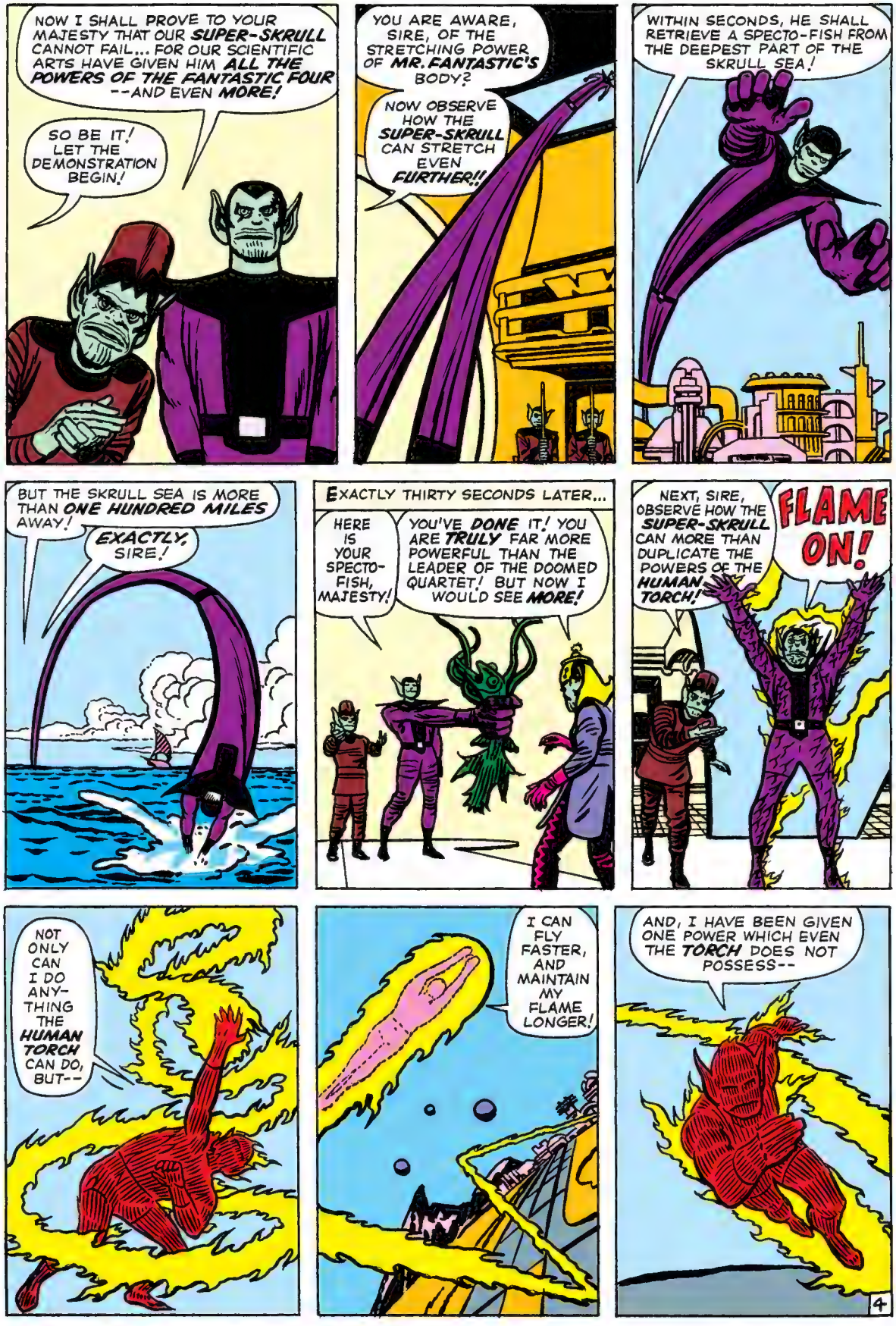

AND, BACK AT THEIR SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS...
THEY CAN HAVE THAT OVERSIZED SKY-ROCKET! THIS LITTLE ÖL' FANTASTI-CAR IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME!
WAIT'LL THE CATS SEE ME DRIVIN' MY DATE THRU CENTRAL PARK IN THIS!
SAME GOES FOR ME! I'M GONNA FLY ALICIA UP NORTH FOR SOME FISHIN'! BOY, IF WE DON'T GET SOME ACTION SOON, THEY'LL BE PRINTIN' OUR ADVENTURES IN ROMANCE MAGS!

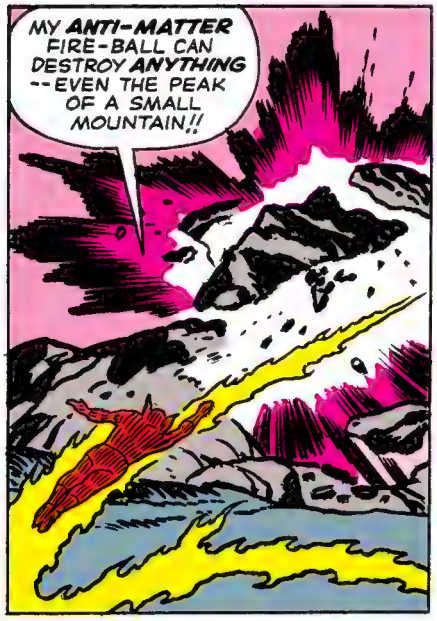

BUT, THERE IS MORE "ACTION" WAITING FOR THE F.F. THAN THEY SUSPECT! FOR, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, COUNTLESS LIGHT YEARS AWAY, IN THE FIFTH QUADRANT OF THE ANDROMEDA GALAXY, ON THE HOME PLANET OF THE FEARSOME SKRULLS...
THE MOMENT IS AT HAND, YOUR MAJESTY!
YES! IT IS ALMOST TIME TO DESTROY THE FANTASTIC FOUR!


EVER SINCE THAT ACCURSED FOURSOME DEFEATED MY ATTEMPTED INVASION OF EARTH LAST YEAR* I HAVE LIVED FOR THIS MOMENT!
I STILL FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THEY MANAGED TO TRIUMPH OVER OUR AGENTS--OVER TRAINED SKRULLS WHO HAVE THE POWER OF CHANGING THEIR BODIES INTO ANY FORM THEY DESIRE!
*FF #2 "SKRULLS FROM OUTER SPACE!"

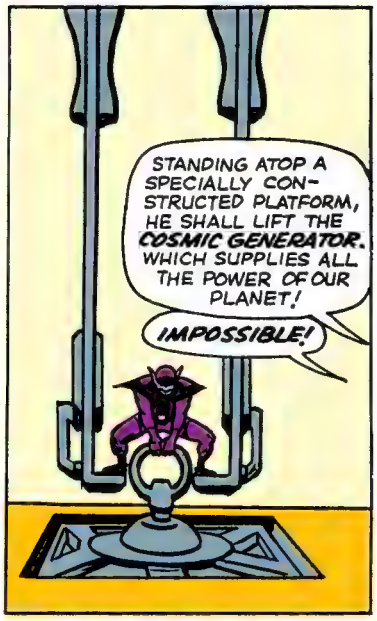

BAH! THAT IS PAST HISTORY! SINCE THAT DAY, I HAVE DEVOTED EVERY RESOURCE OF THIS PLANET TO PERFECTING MY NEW SCHEME FOR CONQUERING THE FANTASTIC FOUR--AND THE PLANET EARTH! AND NOW WE SHALL SEE THE RESULTS OF THAT EFFORT!
HE APPROACHES NOW, YOUR MAJESTY! THE ONE WHO CANNOT FAIL!

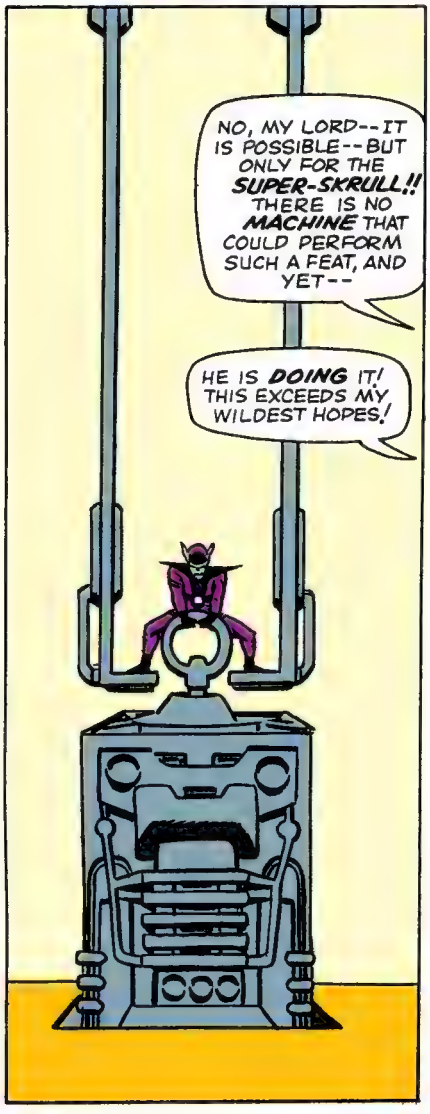

FOR THIS, I HAVE EMPTIED OUR TREASURY, DEVOTED ALL OUR SCIENTIFIC TALENTS, WORKED MY PEOPLE LIKE SLAVES--FOR THIS MOMENT!
ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE MIGHTIEST WARRIOR IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE--THE SUPER-SKRULL!!
ALL HOMAGE TO YOUR SUPREME MAJESTY, SIRE! I AWAIT YOUR COMMANDS!
3

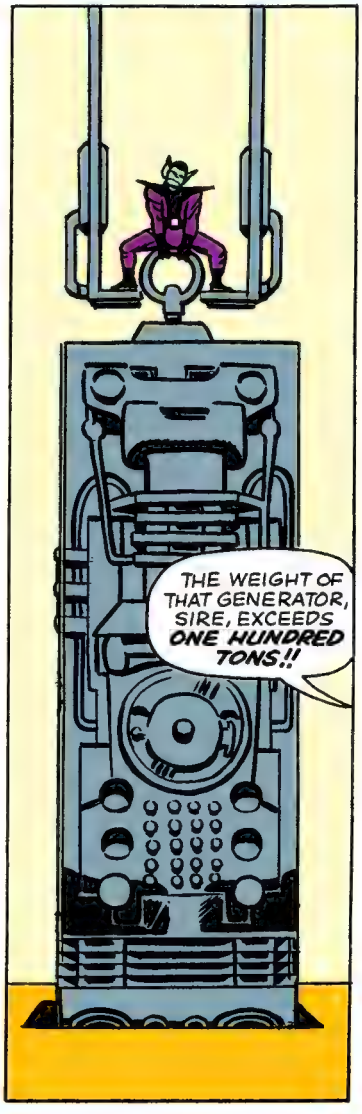

NOW I SHALL PROVE TO YOUR MAJESTY THAT OUR SUPER-SKRULL CANNOT FAIL... FOR OUR SCIENTIFIC ARTS HAVE GIVEN HIM ALL THE POWERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR --AND EVEN MORE!
SO BE IT! LET THE DEMONSTRATION BEGIN!
YOU ARE AWARE, SIRE, OF THE STRETCHING POWER OF MR. FANTASTIC'S BODY?
NOW OBSERVE HOW THE SUPER-SKRULL CAN STRETCH EVEN FURTHER!!
WITHIN SECONDS, HE SHALL RETRIEVE A SPECTO-FISH FROM THE DEEPEST PART OF THE SKRULL SEA!
BUT THE SKRULL SEA IS MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED MILES AWAY!
EXACTLY, SIRE!
EXACTLY THIRTY SECONDS LATER...
HERE IS YOUR SPECTO-FISH, MAJESTY!
YOU'VE DONE IT! YOU ARE TRULY FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN THE LEADER OF THE DOOMED QUARTET! BUT NOW I WOULD SEE MORE!
NEXT, SIRE, OBSERVE HOW THE SUPER-SKRULL CAN MORE THAN DUPLICATE THE POWERS OF THE HUMAN TORCH!
FLAME ON!
NOT ONLY CAN I DO ANY-THING THE HUMAN TORCH CAN DO, BUT--
I CAN FLY FASTER, AND MAINTAIN MY FLAME LONGER!
AND, I HAVE BEEN GIVEN ONE POWER WHICH EVEN THE TORCH DOES NOT POSSESS--
4

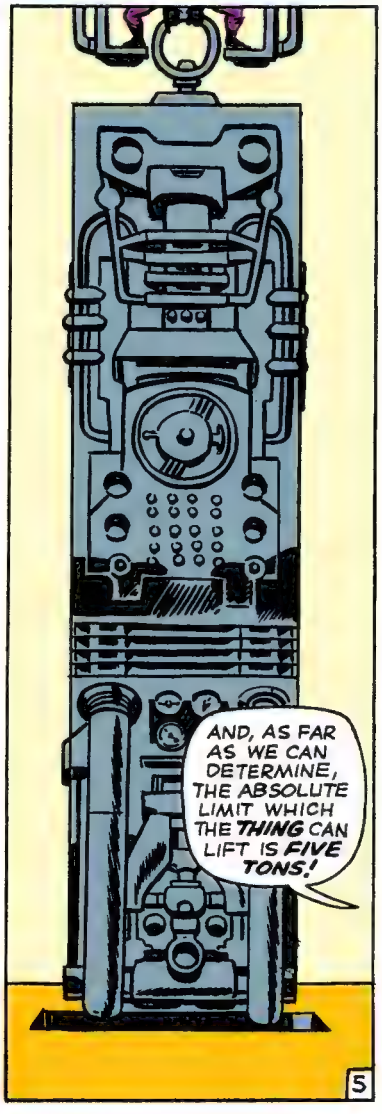

MY ANTI-MATTER FIRE-BALL CAN DESTROY ANYTHING --EVEN THE PEAK OF A SMALL MOUNTAIN!!

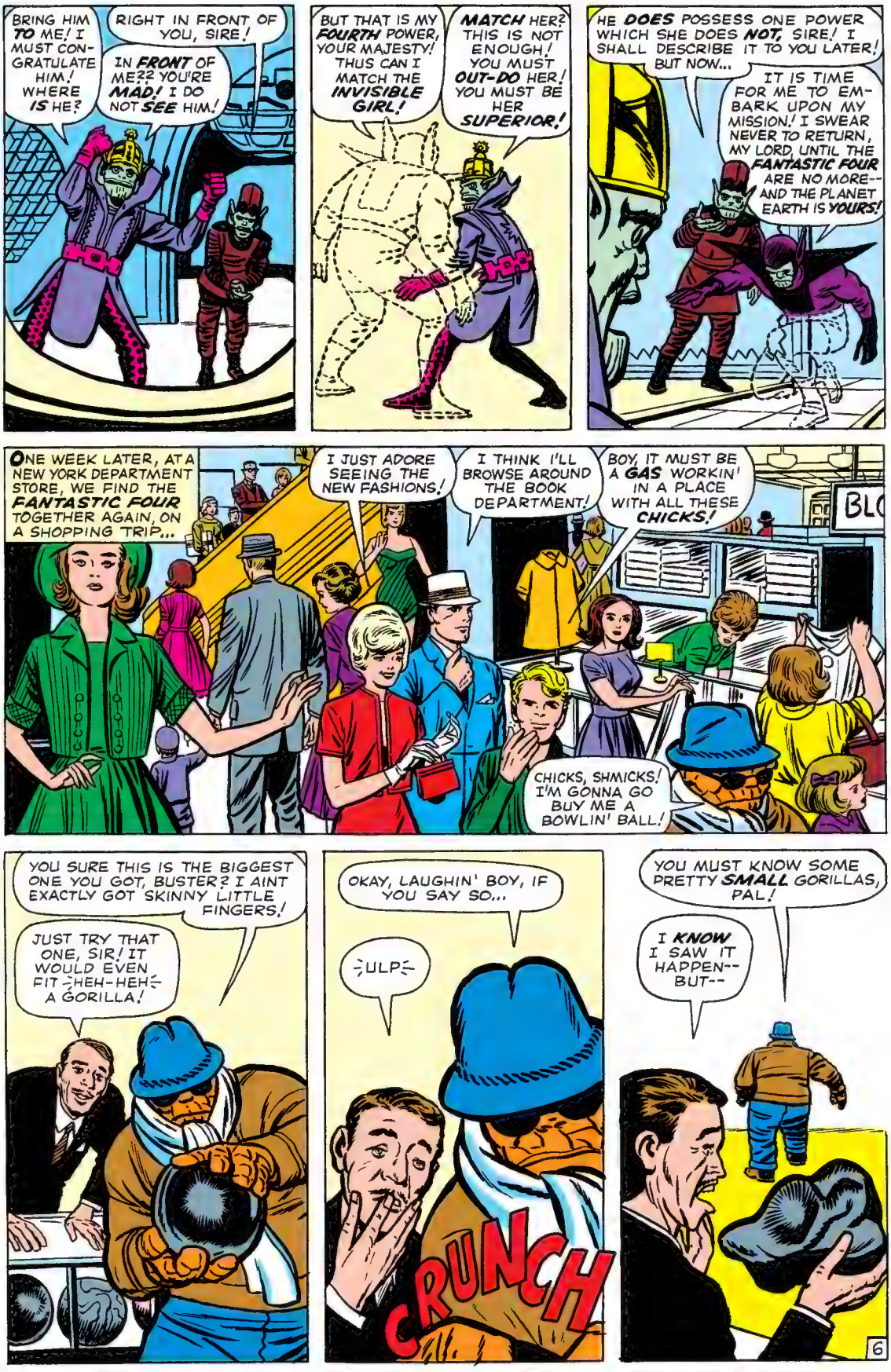
ENOUGH! I AM ROYALLY IMPRESSED! NOW SHOW ME HIS OTHER POWERS! FOR THIS TIME WE DARE NOT FAIL!
BEHOLD, MY LORD, HOW THE SUPER-SKRULL SHALL NOW EXHIBIT A STRENGTH WHICH SURPASSES THAT OF THE MIGHTY THING!

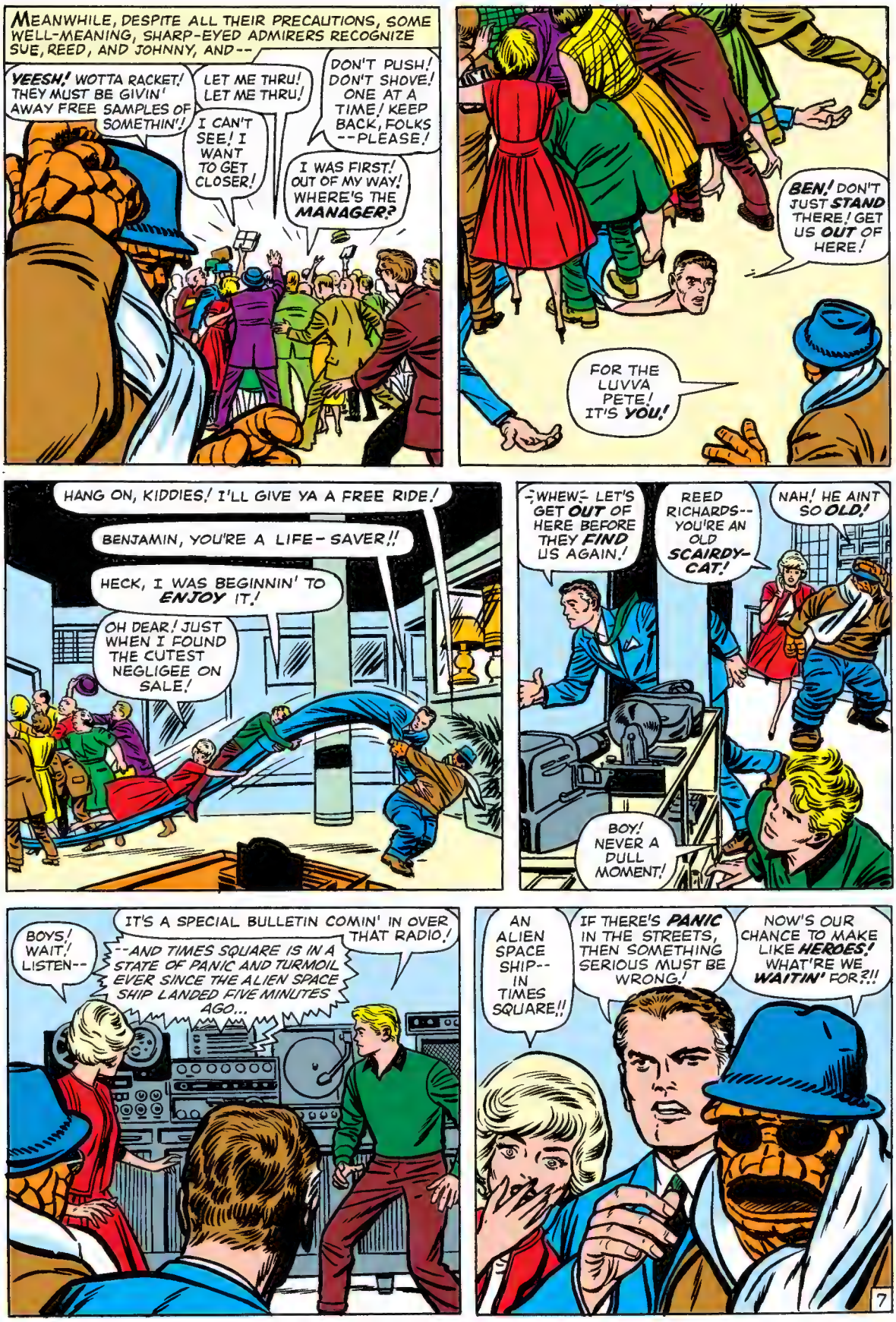

STANDING ATOP A SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED PLATFORM, HE SHALL LIFT THE COSMIC GENERATOR, WHICH SUPPLIES ALL THE POWER OF OUR PLANET!
IMPOSSIBLE!


NO, MY LORD--IT IS POSSIBLE--BUT ONLY FOR THE SUPER-SKRULL!! THERE IS NO MACHINE THAT COULD PERFORM SUCH A FEAT, AND YET--
HE IS DOING IT! THIS EXCEEDS MY WILDEST HOPES!


THE WEIGHT OF THAT GENERATOR, SIRE, EXCEEDS ONE HUNDRED TONS!!

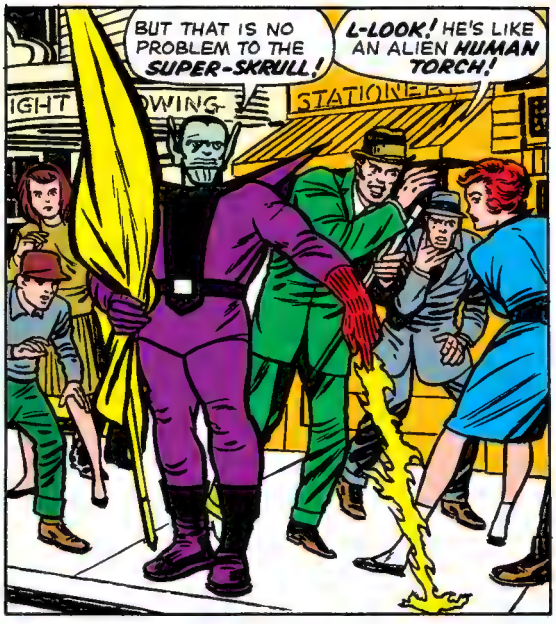

AND, AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, THE ABSOLUTE LIMIT WHICH THE THING CAN LIFT IS FIVE TONS!

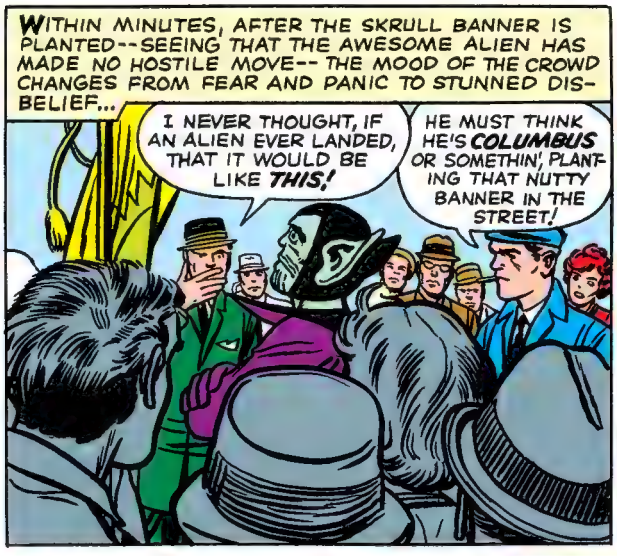

BRING HIM TO ME! I MUST CONGRATULATE HIM! WHERE IS HE?
RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU, SIRE!
IN FRONT OF ME?? YOU'RE MAD! I DO NOT SEE HIM!
BUT THAT IS MY FOURTH POWER, YOUR MAJESTY! THUS CAN I MATCH THE INVISIBLE GIRL!
MATCH HER? THIS IS NOT ENOUGH! YOU MUST OUT-DO HER! YOU MUST BE HER SUPERIOR!
HE DOES POSSESS ONE POWER WHICH SHE DOES NOT, SIRE! I SHALL DESCRIBE IT TO YOU LATER! BUT NOW...
IT IS TIME FOR ME TO EMBARK UPON MY MISSION! I SWEAR NEVER TO RETURN, MY LORD, UNTIL THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE NO MORE--AND THE PLANET EARTH IS YOURS!
ONE WEEK LATER, AT A NEW YORK DEPARTMENT STORE, WE FIND THE FANTASTIC FOUR TOGETHER AGAIN, ON A SHOPPING TRIP...
I JUST ADORE SEEING THE NEW FASHIONS!
I THINK I'LL BROWSE AROUND THE BOOK DEPARTMENT!
BOY, IT MUST BE A GAS WORKIN' IN A PLACE WITH ALL THESE CHICKS!
CHICKS, SHMICKS! I'M GONNA GO BUY ME A BOWLIN' BALL!
YOU SURE THIS IS THE BIGGEST ONE YOU GOT, BUSTER? I AINT EXACTLY GOT SKINNY LITTLE FINGERS!
JUST TRY THAT ONE, SIR! IT WOULD EVEN FIT -HEH-HEH- A GORILLA!
OKAY, LAUGHIN' BOY, IF YOU SAY SO...
-ULP-
CRUNCH
YOU MUST KNOW SOME PRETTY SMALL GORILLAS, PAL!
I KNOW I SAW IT HAPPEN--BUT--
6


MEANWHILE, DESPITE ALL THEIR PRECAUTIONS, SOME WELL-MEANING, SHARP-EYED ADMIRERS RECOGNIZE SUE, REED, AND JOHNNY, AND--
YEESH! WOTTA RACKET! THEY MUST BE GIVIN' AWAY FREE SAMPLES OF SOMETHIN'!
LET ME THRU! LET ME THRU!
I CAN'T SEE! I WANT TO GET CLOSER!
DON'T PUSH! DON'T SHOVE! ONE AT A TIME! KEEP BACK, FOLKS --PLEASE!
I WAS FIRST! OUT OF MY WAY! WHERE'S THE MANAGER?
BEN! DON'T JUST STAND THERE! GET US OUT OF HERE!
FOR THE LUVVA PETE! IT'S YOU!
HANG ON, KIDDIES! I'LL GIVE YA A FREE RIDE!
BENJAMIN, YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER!!
HECK, I WAS BEGINNIN' TO ENJOY IT!
OH DEAR! JUST WHEN I FOUND THE CUTEST NEGLIGEE ON SALE!
WHEW! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THEY FIND US AGAIN!
REED RICHARDS-- YOU'RE AN OLD SCAIRDY-CAT!
NAH! HE AINT SO OLD!
BOY! NEVER A DULL MOMENT!
BOYS! WAIT! LISTEN--
IT'S A SPECIAL BULLETIN COMIN' IN OVER THAT RADIO!
--AND TIMES SQUARE IS IN A STATE OF PANIC AND TURMOIL EVER SINCE THE ALIEN SPACE SHIP LANDED FIVE MINUTES AGO...
AN ALIEN SPACE SHIP-- IN TIMES SQUARE!!
IF THERE'S PANIC IN THE STREETS, THEN SOMETHING SERIOUS MUST BE WRONG!
NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO MAKE LIKE HEROES! WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR?!!

UH OH! THE THUNDERIN' HERD FOUND US AGAIN! WELL, THIS IS NO TIME TO PLAY FOOTSIES WITH A BUNCH OF FRANTIC FANS!
FLAME ON!
SORRY, FOLKS! WE'VE GOT THINGS TO DO!
KEEP GOIN', JOHNNY-- I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
MABEL! HOW CLUMSY CAN YOU BE!!?
I'LL LEAVE, TOO --IN MY OWN LITTLE WAY!
ZELDA! LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING, DEARIE!
AT THAT VERY MOMENT, TEN BLOCKS AWAY, IN THE HEART OF TIMES SQUARE...
I CLAIM THIS PLANET, AND ALL IT POSSESSES, IN THE NAME OF THE IMPERIAL SKRULL EMPIRE!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?? WHAT'S HE ADVERTISIN'?
NOTHIN', MAC! HE'S FOR REAL!
HE SURE IS! THREE WOMEN FAINTED ALREADY--
THE MILITIA OUGHTTA BE ARRIVIN' HERE ANY MINUTE!
8

I'LL PLANT MY BANNER TO MARK THE SPOT WHERE I LANDED, AND...
THE GROUND IS TOO HARD! IT WILL NOT PENETRATE!

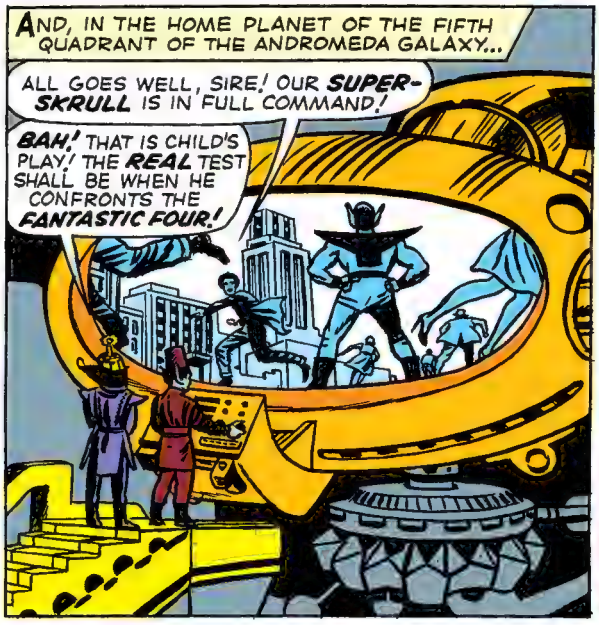

BUT THAT IS NO PROBLEM TO THE SUPER-SKRULL!
L-LOOK! HE'S LIKE AN ALIEN HUMAN TORCH!


WITHIN MINUTES, AFTER THE SKRULL BANNER IS PLANTED--SEEING THAT THE AWESOME ALIEN HAS MADE NO HOSTILE MOVE-- THE MOOD OF THE CROWD CHANGES FROM FEAR AND PANIC TO STUNNED DISBELIEF...
I NEVER THOUGHT, IF AN ALIEN EVER LANDED, THAT IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS!
HE MUST THINK HE'S COLUMBUS OR SOMETHIN', PLANTING THAT NUTTY BANNER IN THE STREET!

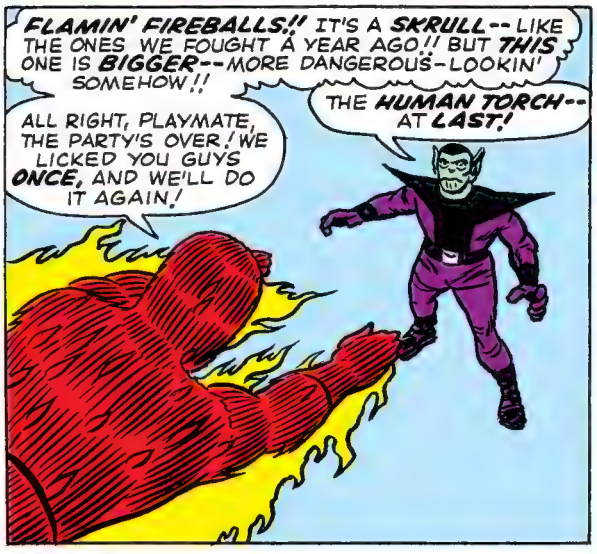
YOU MAY ALL DISPERSE NOW, AND RETURN TO YOUR EVERYDAY TASKS!
BEFORE LONG, I SHALL ISSUE THE FIRST IMPERIAL ORDERS FROM YOUR NEW PROVISIONAL SKRULL GOVERNMENT!

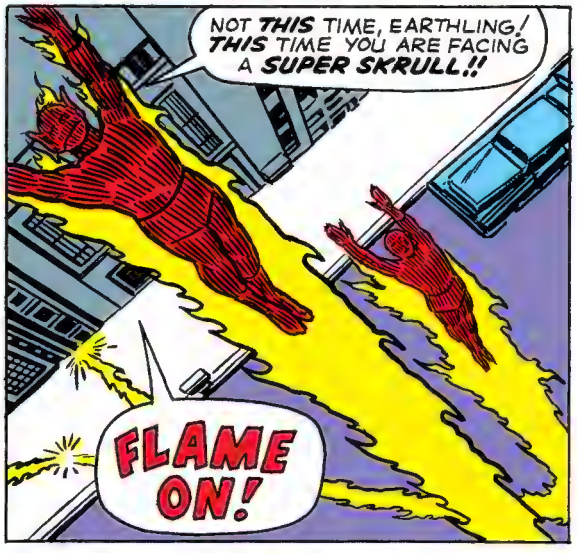
HE ACTUALLY SEEMS TO MEAN IT! HE THINKS HE HAS TAKEN POSSESSION OF THIS PLANET!
AW, WHY DOESN'T HE TAKE OFF THAT MASK AND GO BACK WHERE HE CAME FROM? WE GOT ENOUGH CRACKPOTS IN TOWN ALREADY!
YEAH! GET LOST, CREEP!

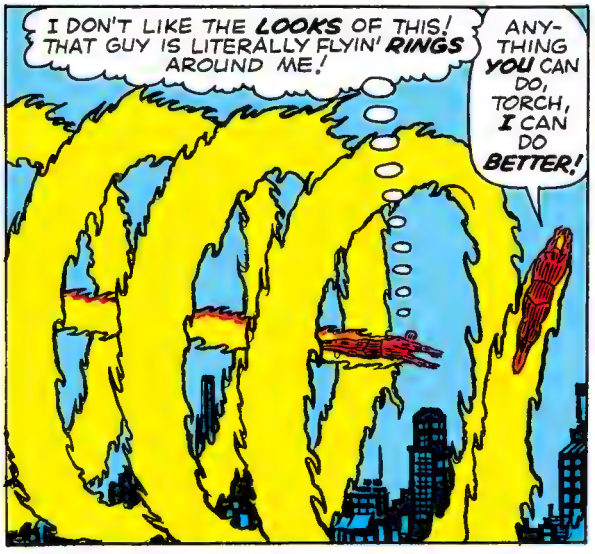
YOU DARE SPEAK THUS TO YOUR NEW MASTER??? BEGONE, BEFORE I FORGET HOW WEAK AND DEFENSELESS YOU ARE!

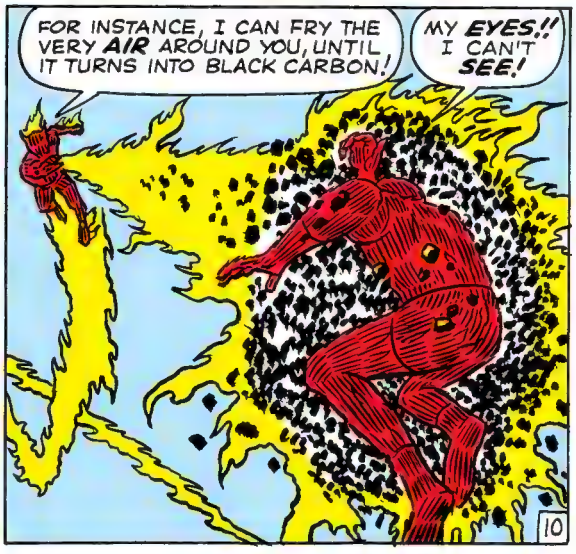

AND, IN THE HOME PLANET OF THE FIFTH QUADRANT OF THE ANDROMEDA GALAXY...
ALL GOES WELL, SIRE! OUR SUPER-SKRULL IS IN FULL COMMAND!
BAH! THAT IS CHILD'S PLAY! THE REAL TEST SHALL BE WHEN HE CONFRONTS THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

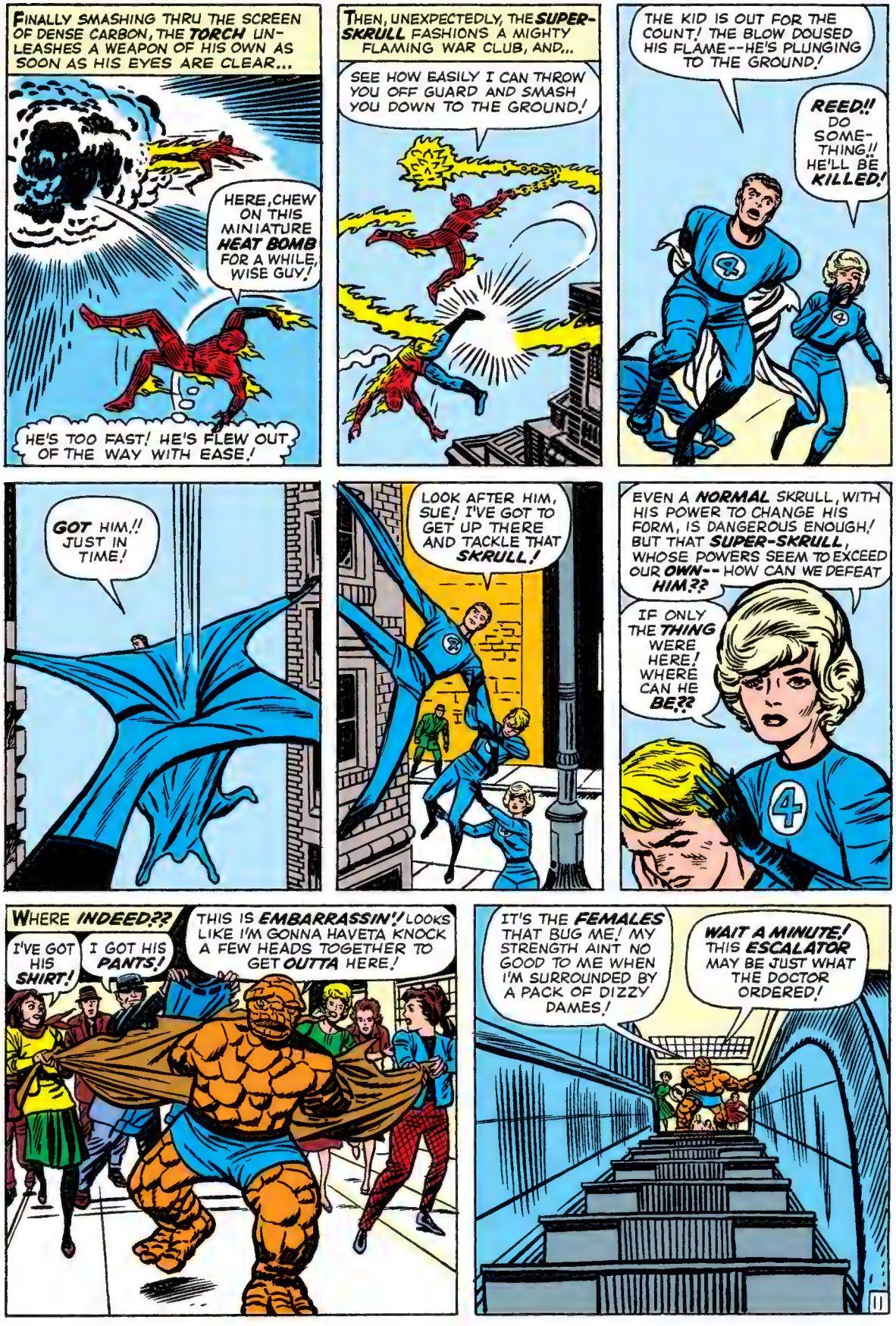
BEHOLD!! THE MOMENT IS AT HAND! EVEN NOW THE HUMAN TORCH APPROACHES!
QUICKLY, ADJUST THE FOCUS MORE CLEARLY! I HAVE WAITED MONTHS FOR THIS MOMENT! I DO NOT WANT TO MISS A THING!

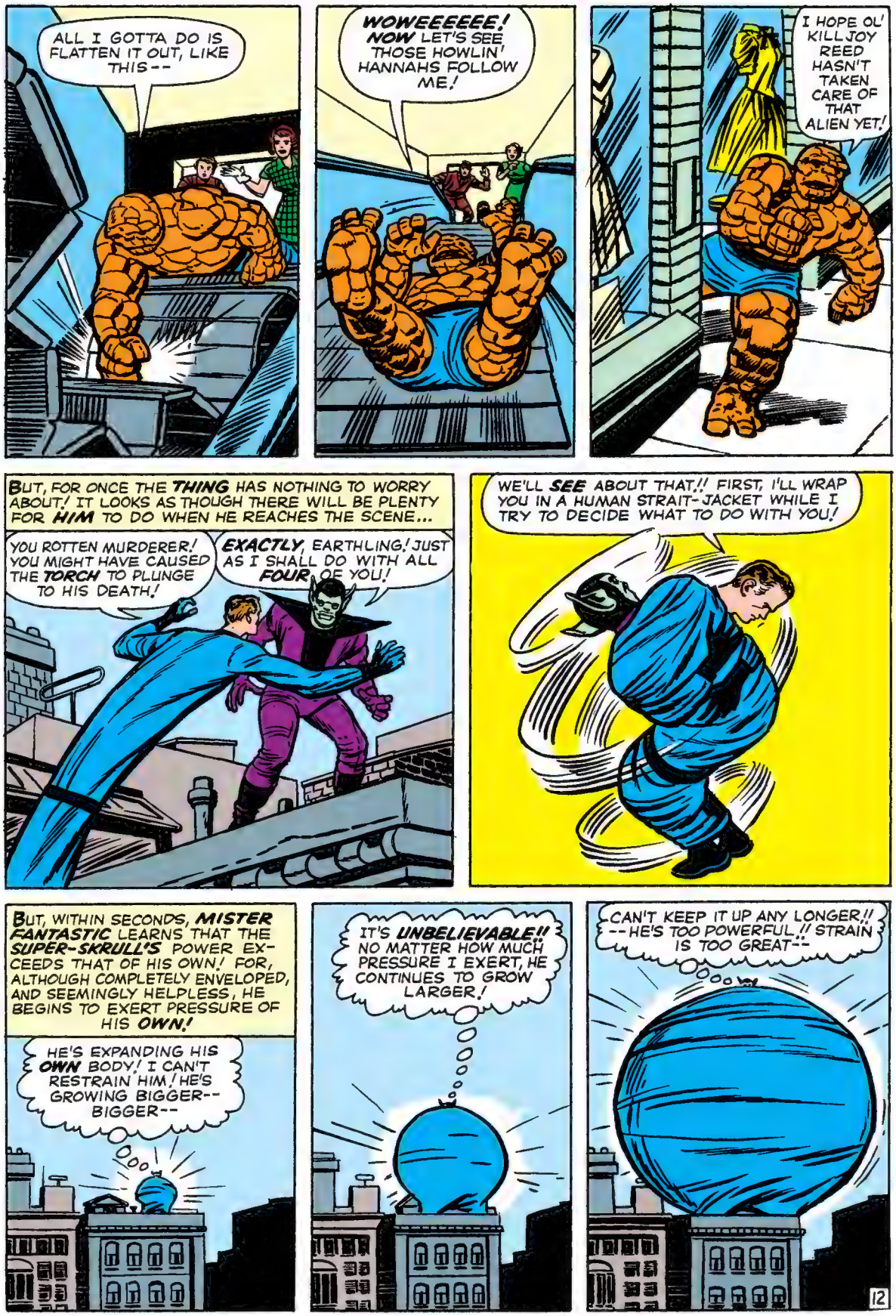

FLAMIN' FIREBALLS!! IT'S A SKRULL--LIKE THE ONES WE FOUGHT A YEAR AGO!! BUT THIS ONE IS BIGGER--MORE DANGEROUS-LOOKIN' SOMEHOW!!
ALL RIGHT, PLAYMATE, THE PARTY'S OVER! WE LICKED YOU GUYS ONCE, AND WE'LL DO IT AGAIN!
THE HUMAN TORCH--AT LAST!


NOT THIS TIME, EARTHLING! THIS TIME YOU ARE FACING A SUPER SKRULL!!
FLAME ON!

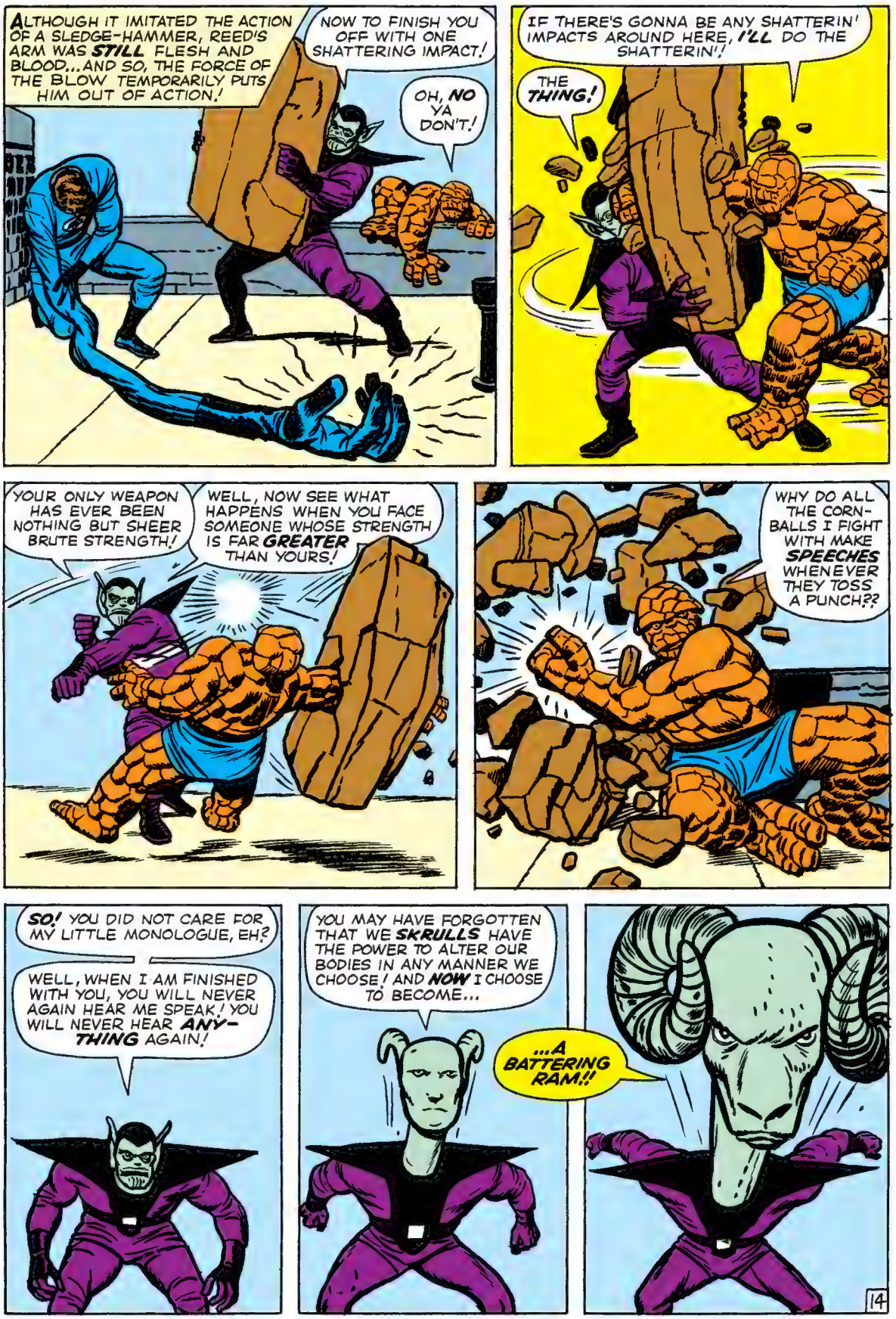

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS! THAT GUY IS LITERALLY FLYIN' RINGS AROUND ME!
ANY-THING YOU CAN DO, TORCH, I CAN DO BETTER!

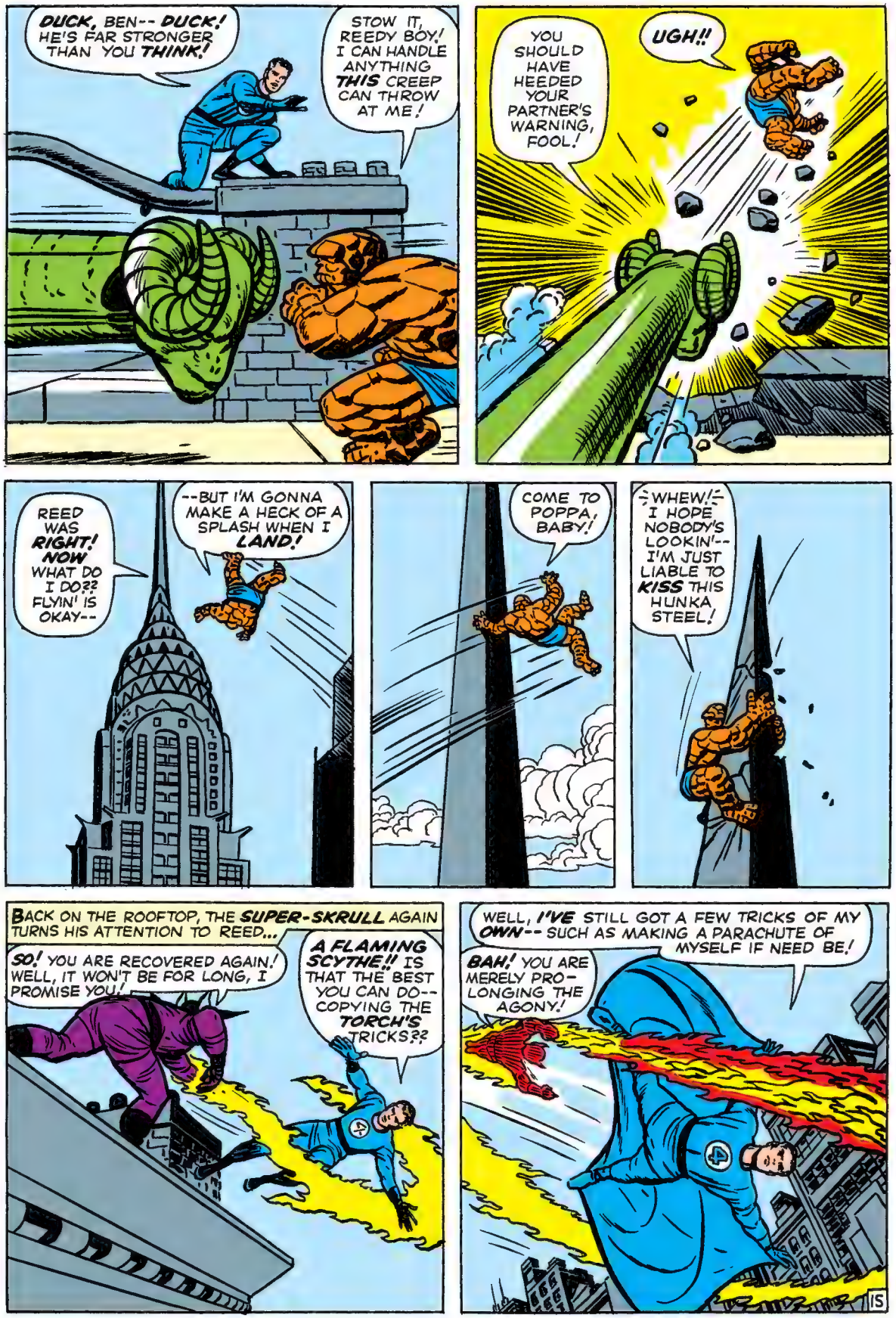

FOR INSTANCE, I CAN FRY THE VERY AIR AROUND YOU, UNTIL IT TURNS INTO BLACK CARBON!
MY EYES!! I CAN'T SEE!

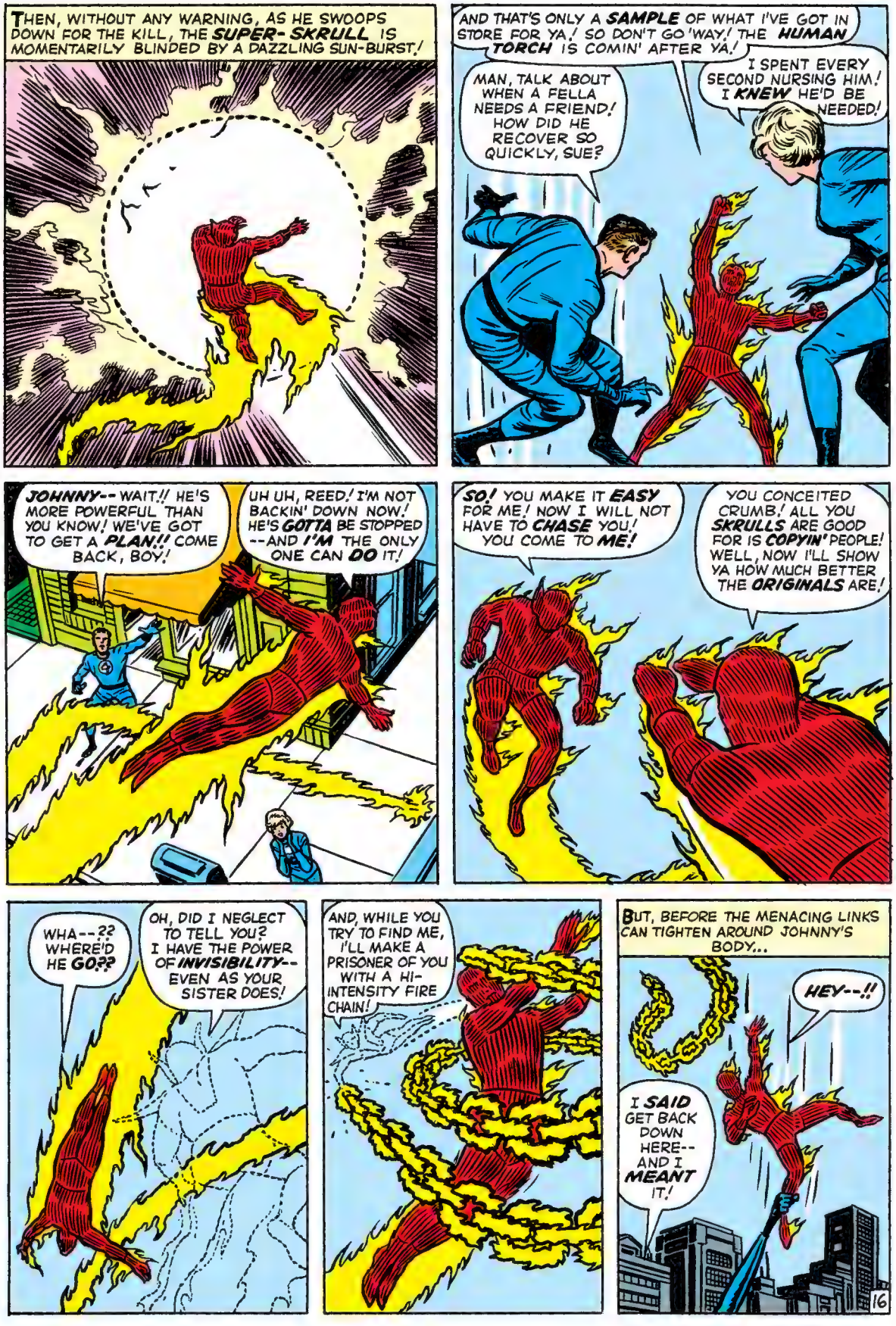

FINALLY SMASHING THRU THE SCREEN OF DENSE CARBON, THE TORCH UNLEASHES A WEAPON OF HIS OWN AS SOON AS HIS EYES ARE CLEAR...
HERE, CHEW ON THIS MINIATURE HEAT BOMB FOR A WHILE, WISE GUY!
HE'S TOO FAST! HE'S FLEW OUT OF THE WAY WITH EASE!
THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY, THE SUPER-SKRULL FASHIONS A MIGHTY FLAMING WAR CLUB, AND...
SEE HOW EASILY I CAN THROW YOU OFF GUARD AND SMASH YOU DOWN TO THE GROUND!
THE KID IS OUT FOR THE COUNT! THE BLOW DOUSED HIS FLAME--HE'S PLUNGING TO THE GROUND!
REED!! DO SOMETHING!! HE'LL BE KILLED!
GOT HIM!! JUST IN TIME!
LOOK AFTER HIM, SUE! I'VE GOT TO GET UP THERE AND TACKLE THAT SKRULL!
EVEN A NORMAL SKRULL, WITH HIS POWER TO CHANGE HIS FORM, IS DANGEROUS ENOUGH! BUT THAT SUPER-SKRULL, WHOSE POWERS SEEM TO EXCEED OUR OWN-- HOW CAN WE DEFEAT HIM??
IF ONLY THE THING WERE HERE! WHERE CAN HE BE??
WHERE INDEED??
I'VE GOT HIS SHIRT!
I GOT HIS PANTS!
THIS IS EMBARRASSIN'! LOOKS LIKE I'M GONNA HAVETA KNOCK A FEW HEADS TOGETHER TO GET OUTTA HERE!
IT'S THE FEMALES THAT BUG ME! MY STRENGTH AINT NO GOOD TO ME WHEN I'M SURROUNDED BY A PACK OF DIZZY DAMES!
WAIT A MINUTE! THIS ESCALATOR MAY BE JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!


ALL I GOTTA DO IS FLATTEN IT OUT, LIKE THIS--
WOWEEEEEE! NOW LET'S SEE THOSE HOWLIN' HANNAHS FOLLOW ME!
I HOPE OL' KILLJOY REED HASN'T TAKEN CARE OF THAT ALIEN YET!
BUT, FOR ONCE THE THING HAS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THERE WILL BE PLENTY FOR HIM TO DO WHEN HE REACHES THE SCENE...
YOU ROTTEN MURDERER! YOU MIGHT HAVE CAUSED THE TORCH TO PLUNGE TO HIS DEATH!
EXACTLY, EARTHLING! JUST AS I SHALL DO WITH ALL FOUR OF YOU!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT,!! FIRST, I'LL WRAP YOU IN A HUMAN STRAIT-JACKET WHILE I TRY TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOU!
BUT, WITHIN SECONDS, MISTER FANTASTIC LEARNS THAT THE SUPER-SKRULL'S POWER EXCEEDS THAT OF HIS OWN! FOR, ALTHOUGH COMPLETELY ENVELOPED, AND SEEMINGLY HELPLESS, HE BEGINS TO EXERT PRESSURE OF HIS OWN!
HE'S EXPANDING HIS OWN BODY! I CAN'T RESTRAIN HIM! HE'S GROWING BIGGER-- BIGGER--
IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!! NO MATTER HOW MUCH PRESSURE I EXERT, HE CONTINUES TO GROW LARGER!
CAN'T KEEP IT UP ANY LONGER,!! --HE'S TOO POWERFUL,!! STRAIN IS TOO GREAT--
12

FINALLY...
I--HAD TO LET GO!!
NOW DO YOU REALIZE HOW HELPLESS YOU ARE AGAINST ME? I AM MIGHTIER THAN ALL OF YOU!
FELLA, ON THIS PLANET, THAT'S ONLY CALLED "WINNING THE FIRST ROUND"!!
SUDDENLY, MR. FANTASTIC MOVES WITH THE SPEED OF THOUGHT...
LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO AGAINST A POWER BLOW FROM A HUMAN SLEDGE-HAMMER!
YOU'RE FAST! BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH FOR ME!
IN A SPLIT-SECOND, THE SUPER SKRULL'S ARM STRETCHES AN UNBELIEVABLE DISTANCE--TO THE MOUND OF LOOSE ROCKS ON THE PALISADES SHORE! THEN, GRASPING ONE IN HIS STEEL-LIKE FINGERS...
...HE MANAGES TO RETRIEVE IT IN TIME TO USE IT AS A SHIELD!
WHOOM!
13

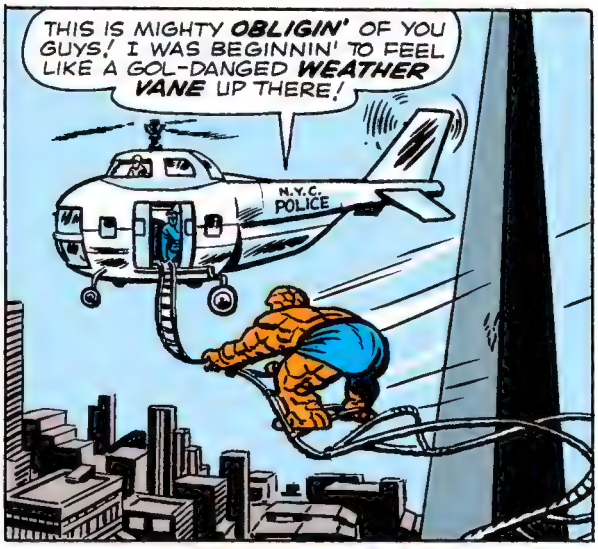

ALTHOUGH IT IMITATED THE ACTION OF A SLEDGE-HAMMER, REED'S ARM WAS STILL FLESH AND BLOOD...AND SO, THE FORCE OF THE BLOW TEMPORARILY PUTS HIM OUT OF ACTION.!
NOW TO FINISH YOU OFF WITH ONE SHATTERING IMPACT.!
OH, NO YA DON'T.!
IF THERE'S GONNA BE ANY SHATTERIN' IMPACTS AROUND HERE, I'LL DO THE SHATTERIN'!
THE THING!
YOUR ONLY WEAPON HAS EVER BEEN NOTHING BUT SHEER BRUTE STRENGTH.!
WELL, NOW SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU FACE SOMEONE WHOSE STRENGTH IS FAR GREATER THAN YOURS.!
WHY DO ALL THE CORN-BALLS I FIGHT WITH MAKE SPEECHES WHENEVER THEY TOSS A PUNCH??
SO! YOU DID NOT CARE FOR MY LITTLE MONOLOGUE, EH?
WELL, WHEN I AM FINISHED WITH YOU, YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN HEAR ME SPEAK! YOU WILL NEVER HEAR ANY-THING AGAIN!
YOU MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT WE SKRULLS HAVE THE POWER TO ALTER OUR BODIES IN ANY MANNER WE CHOOSE! AND NOW I CHOOSE TO BECOME...
...A BATTERING RAM!!
14

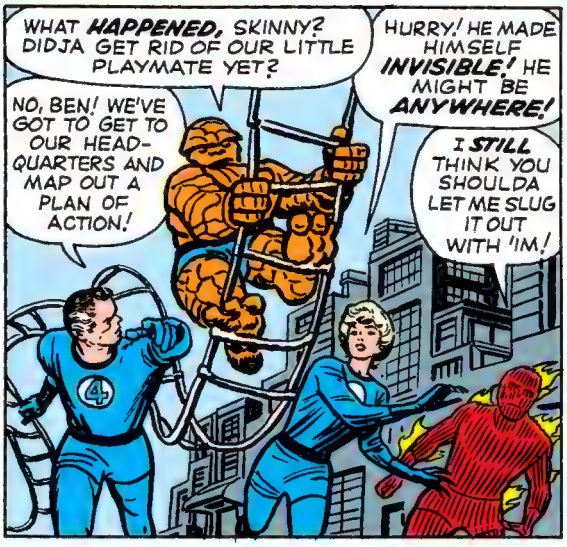

DUCK, BEN-- DUCK! HE'S FAR STRONGER THAN YOU THINK!
STOW IT, REEDY BOY! I CAN HANDLE ANYTHING THIS CREEP CAN THROW AT ME!
YOU SHOULD HAVE HEEDED YOUR PARTNER'S WARNING, FOOL!
UGH!!
REED WAS RIGHT! NOW WHAT DO I DO?? FLYIN' IS OKAY--
--BUT I'M GONNA MAKE A HECK OF A SPLASH WHEN I LAND!
COME TO POPPA, BABY!
WHEW! I HOPE NOBODY'S LOOKIN'-- I'M JUST LIABLE TO KISS THIS HUNKA STEEL!
BACK ON THE ROOFTOP, THE SUPER-SKRULL AGAIN TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO REED...
SO! YOU ARE RECOVERED AGAIN! WELL, IT WON'T BE FOR LONG, I PROMISE YOU!
A FLAMING SCYTHE!! IS THAT THE BEST YOU CAN DO-- COPYING THE TORCH'S TRICKS??
WELL, I'VE STILL GOT A FEW TRICKS OF MY OWN-- SUCH AS MAKING A PARACHUTE OF MYSELF IF NEED BE!
BAH! YOU ARE MERELY PRO-LONGING THE AGONY!
15

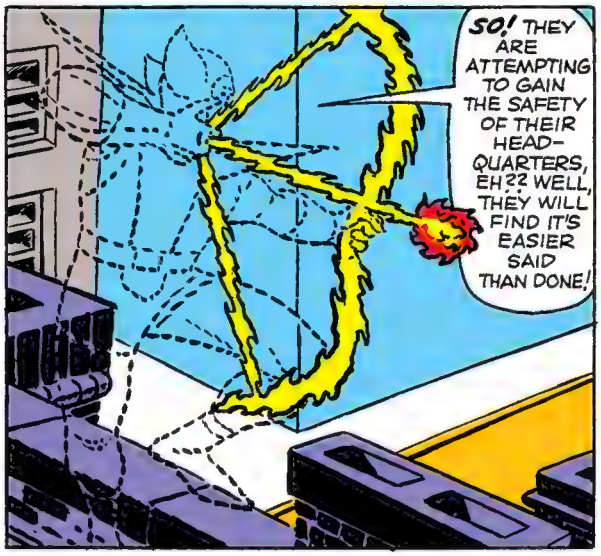

THEN, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, AS HE SWOOPS DOWN FOR THE KILL, THE SUPER-SKRULL IS MOMENTARILY BLINDED BY A DAZZLING SUN-BURST!
AND THAT'S ONLY A SAMPLE OF WHAT I'VE GOT IN STORE FOR YA! SO DON'T GO 'WAY! THE HUMAN TORCH IS COMIN' AFTER YA!
MAN, TALK ABOUT WHEN A FELLA NEEDS A FRIEND! HOW DID HE RECOVER SO QUICKLY, SUE?
I SPENT EVERY SECOND NURSING HIM! I KNEW HE'D BE NEEDED!
JOHNNY--WAIT!! HE'S MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU KNOW! WE'VE GOT TO GET A PLAN!! COME BACK, BOY!
UH UH, REED! I'M NOT BACKIN' DOWN NOW! HE'S GOTTA BE STOPPED --AND I'M THE ONLY ONE CAN DO IT!
SO! YOU MAKE IT EASY FOR ME! NOW I WILL NOT HAVE TO CHASE YOU! YOU COME TO ME!
YOU CONCEITED CRUMB! ALL YOU SKRULLS ARE GOOD FOR IS COPYIN' PEOPLE! WELL, NOW I'LL SHOW YA HOW MUCH BETTER THE ORIGINALS ARE!
WHA--?? WHERE'D HE GO??
OH, DID I NEGLECT TO TELL YOU? I HAVE THE POWER OF INVISIBILITY--EVEN AS YOUR SISTER DOES!
AND, WHILE YOU TRY TO FIND ME, I'LL MAKE A PRISONER OF YOU WITH A HI-INTENSITY FIRE CHAIN!
BUT, BEFORE THE MENACING LINKS CAN TIGHTEN AROUND JOHNNY'S BODY...
HEY--!!
I SAID GET BACK DOWN HERE--AND I MEANT IT!
16

AWW, WHAT DID YOU DO THAT FOR? SAY! YOU BURNED YOURSELF ON MY LEG!
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT, KID! I HAD TO DO IT! NONE OF US, ALONE, ARE A MATCH FOR THE SKRULL!
THIS IS TERRIBLE! I'VE NEVER FELT SO HELPLESS--SO USELESS!

DON'T LET THAT BOTHER YOU, HONEY! WITH ALL OUR BLUSTER, WE HAVEN'T ACHIEVED ANY MORE THAN YOU! BUT--WHERE IS THE THING??
LOOK, REED! UP THERE!


THIS IS MIGHTY OBLIGIN' OF YOU GUYS! I WAS BEGINNIN' TO FEEL LIKE A GOL-DANGED WEATHER VANE UP THERE!
N.Y.C. POLICE

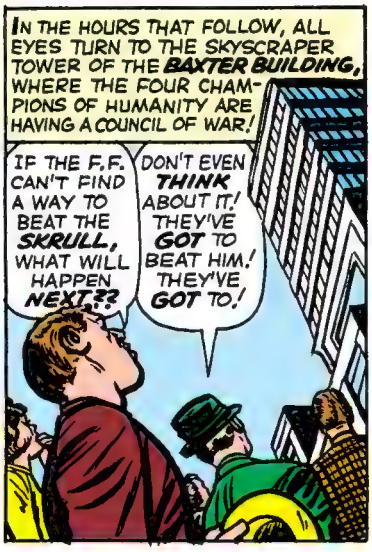

WHAT HAPPENED, SKINNY? DIDJA GET RID OF OUR LITTLE PLAYMATE YET?
HURRY! HE MADE HIMSELF INVISIBLE! HE MIGHT BE ANYWHERE!
NO, BEN! WE'VE GOT TO GET TO OUR HEAD-QUARTERS AND MAP OUT A PLAN OF ACTION!
I STILL THINK YOU SHOULDA LET ME SLUG IT OUT WITH 'IM!

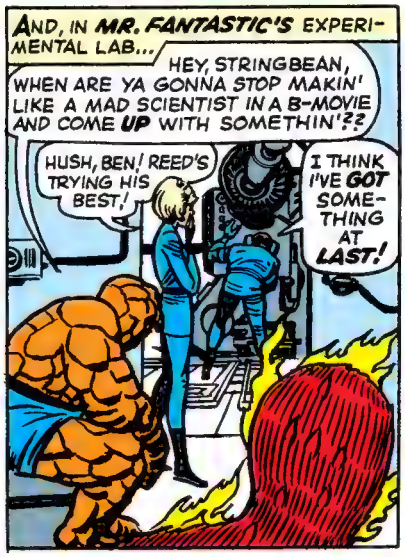

SO! THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO GAIN THE SAFETY OF THEIR HEAD-QUARTERS, EH?? WELL, THEY WILL FIND IT'S EASIER SAID THAN DONE!

HA! DID YOU THINK TO EVADE ME THAT EASILY??
MOVE!! ALL OF YOU! HE'S SHOOTING FIRE-ARROWS AT US!

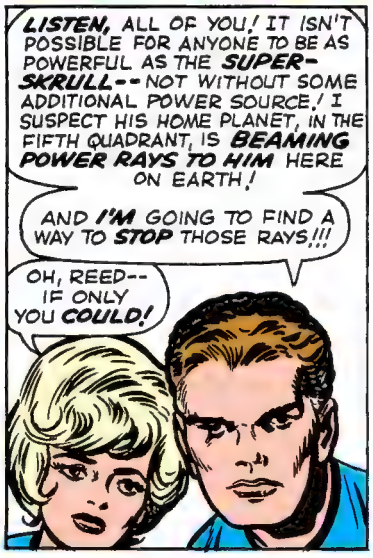
HAH! LET THEM RUN! I SHALL NOT DESCEND TO THEIR LEVEL BY PURSUING THEM!
NOW I KNOW I AM MORE POWERFUL THAN ALL OF THEM-- AND THEY KNOW IT, TOO!

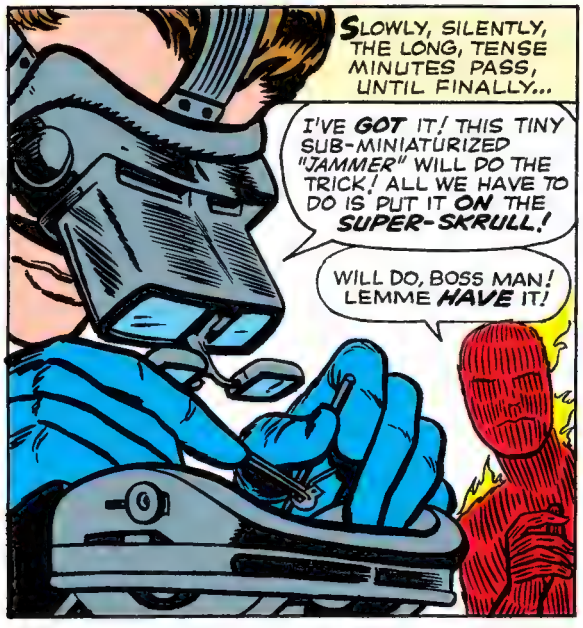
I SHALL ALLOW THEM TO RETURN TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS AND SPEND A SLEEPLESS NIGHT FEARING MY NEXT MOVE! THEN, TOMORROW, I SHALL FINISH THEM OFF AT MY LEISURE!

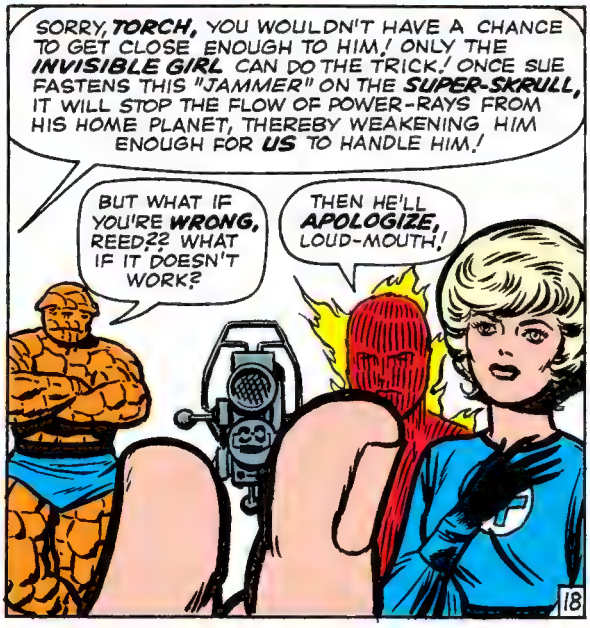

IN THE HOURS THAT FOLLOW, ALL EYES TURN TO THE SKYSCRAPER TOWER OF THE BAXTER BUILDING, WHERE THE FOUR CHAMPIONS OF HUMANITY ARE HAVING A COUNCIL OF WAR!
IF THE F.F. CAN'T FIND A WAY TO BEAT THE SKRULL, WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT??
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT! THEY'VE GOT TO BEAT HIM! THEY'VE GOT TO!

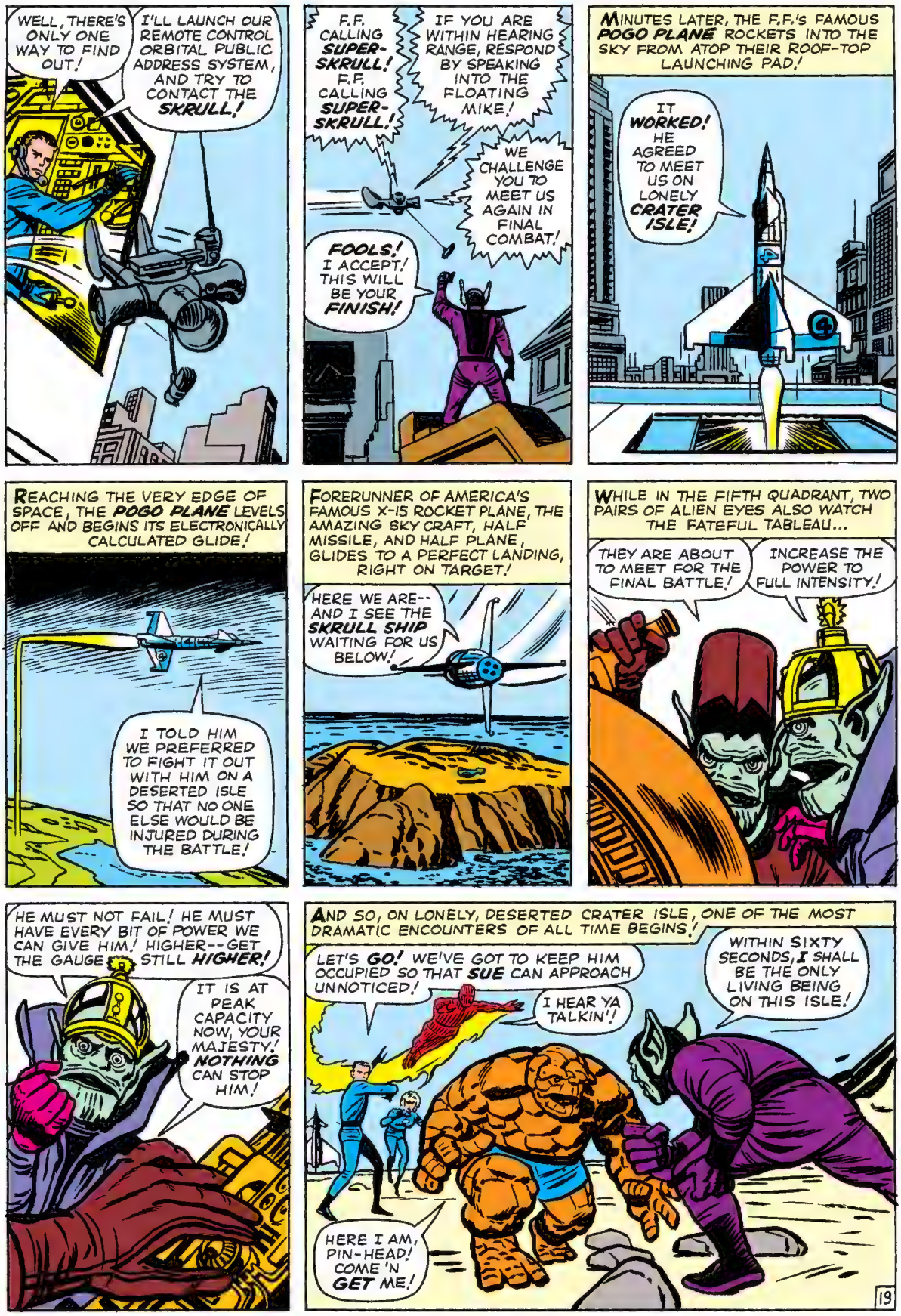

AND, IN MR. FANTASTIC'S EXPERIMENTAL LAB...
HEY, STRINGBEAN, WHEN ARE YA GONNA STOP MAKIN' LIKE A MAD SCIENTIST IN A B-MOVIE AND COME UP WITH SOMETHIN'??
HUSH, BEN! REED'S TRYING HIS BEST!
I THINK I'VE GOT SOMETHING AT LAST!

JUST ON A HUNCH, I'VE BEEN CHECKING THE HEAVENS FOR ANY UNUSUAL MANIFESTATIONS, AND I'VE PICKED UP SOME ULTRA-SONIC POWER RAYS BEAMED TO EARTH FROM THE FIFTH QUADRANT!
BUT WHAT HAS THAT TO DO WITH THE SUPER-SKRULL, REED?
NUTS! YOU'RE BEGINNIN' TO SOUND LIKE THE POOR MAN'S VINCENT PRICE!


LISTEN, ALL OF YOU! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO BE AS POWERFUL AS THE SUPER-SKRULL-- NOT WITHOUT SOME ADDITIONAL POWER SOURCE! I SUSPECT HIS HOME PLANET, IN THE FIFTH QUADRANT, IS BEAMING POWER RAYS TO HIM HERE ON EARTH!
AND I'M GOING TO FIND A WAY TO STOP THOSE RAYS!!!
OH, REED-- IF ONLY YOU COULD!

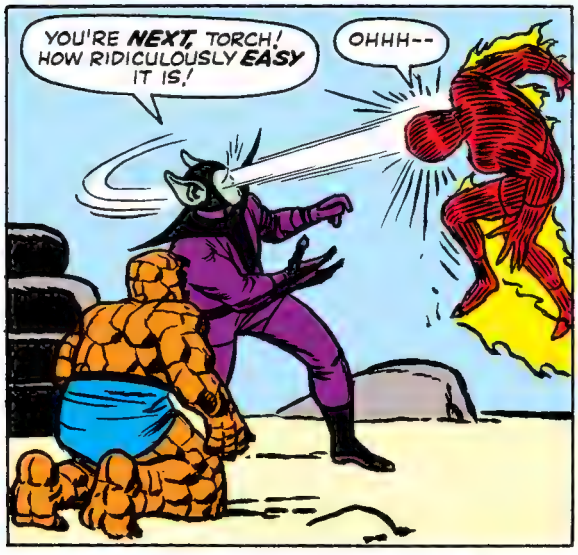

SLOWLY, SILENTLY, THE LONG, TENSE MINUTES PASS, UNTIL FINALLY...
I'VE GOT IT! THIS TINY SUB-MINIATURIZED "JAMMER" WILL DO THE TRICK! ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS PUT IT ON THE SUPER-SKRULL!
WILL DO, BOSS MAN! LEMME HAVE IT!

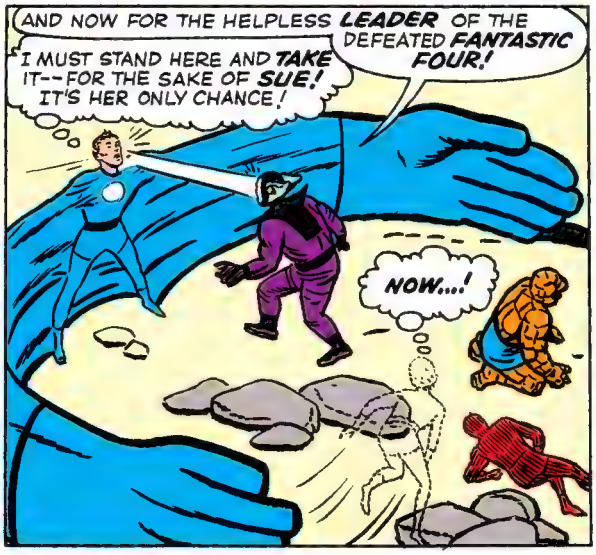

SORRY, TORCH, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HIM! ONLY THE INVISIBLE GIRL CAN DO THE TRICK! ONCE SUE FASTENS THIS "JAMMER" ON THE SUPER-SKRULL, IT WILL STOP THE FLOW OF POWER-RAYS FROM HIS HOME PLANET, THEREBY WEAKENING HIM ENOUGH FOR US TO HANDLE HIM!
BUT WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG, REED?? WHAT IF IT DOESN'T WORK?
THEN HE'LL APOLOGIZE, LOUD-MOUTH!


WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT!
I'LL LAUNCH OUR REMOTE CONTROL ORBITAL PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM, AND TRY TO CONTACT THE SKRULL!
F.F. CALLING SUPER-SKRULL! F.F. CALLING SUPER-SKRULL!
IF YOU ARE WITHIN HEARING RANGE, RESPOND BY SPEAKING INTO THE FLOATING MIKE!
WE CHALLENGE YOU TO MEET US AGAIN IN FINAL COMBAT!
FOOLS! I ACCEPT! THIS WILL BE YOUR FINISH!
MINUTES LATER, THE F.F.'s FAMOUS POGO PLANE ROCKETS INTO THE SKY FROM ATOP THEIR ROOF-TOP LAUNCHING PAD!
IT WORKED! HE AGREED TO MEET US ON LONELY CRATER ISLE!
REACHING THE VERY EDGE OF SPACE, THE POGO PLANE LEVELS OFF AND BEGINS ITS ELECTRONICALLY CALCULATED GLIDE!
I TOLD HIM WE PREFERRED TO FIGHT IT OUT WITH HIM ON A DESERTED ISLE SO THAT NO ONE ELSE WOULD BE INJURED DURING THE BATTLE!
FORERUNNER OF AMERICA'S FAMOUS X-15 ROCKET PLANE, THE AMAZING SKY CRAFT, HALF MISSILE, AND HALF PLANE, GLIDES TO A PERFECT LANDING, RIGHT ON TARGET!
HERE WE ARE-- AND I SEE THE SKRULL SHIP WAITING FOR US BELOW!
WHILE IN THE FIFTH QUADRANT, TWO PAIRS OF ALIEN EYES ALSO WATCH THE FATEFUL TABLEAU...
THEY ARE ABOUT TO MEET FOR THE FINAL BATTLE!
INCREASE THE POWER TO FULL INTENSITY!
HE MUST NOT FAIL! HE MUST HAVE EVERY BIT OF POWER WE CAN GIVE HIM! HIGHER--GET THE GAUGE STILL HIGHER!
IT IS AT PEAK CAPACITY NOW, YOUR MAJESTY! NOTHING CAN STOP HIM!
AND SO, ON LONELY, DESERTED CRATER ISLE, ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC ENCOUNTERS OF ALL TIME BEGINS!
LET'S GO! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP HIM OCCUPIED SO THAT SUE CAN APPROACH UNNOTICED!
I HEAR YA TALKIN'!
WITHIN SIXTY SECONDS, I SHALL BE THE ONLY LIVING BEING ON THIS ISLE!
HERE I AM, PIN-HEAD! COME 'N GET ME!

NOW, SUE! HURRY! WE'LL KEEP HIM BUSY!

FOOL! THIS IS THE ONE EXTRA POWER YOU DID NOT KNOW I POSSESSED! THE BLINDING POWER OF IRRESISTIBLE HYPNOTISM!
MY EYES!! CAN'T SEE--!!! C-CAN'T MOVE!!

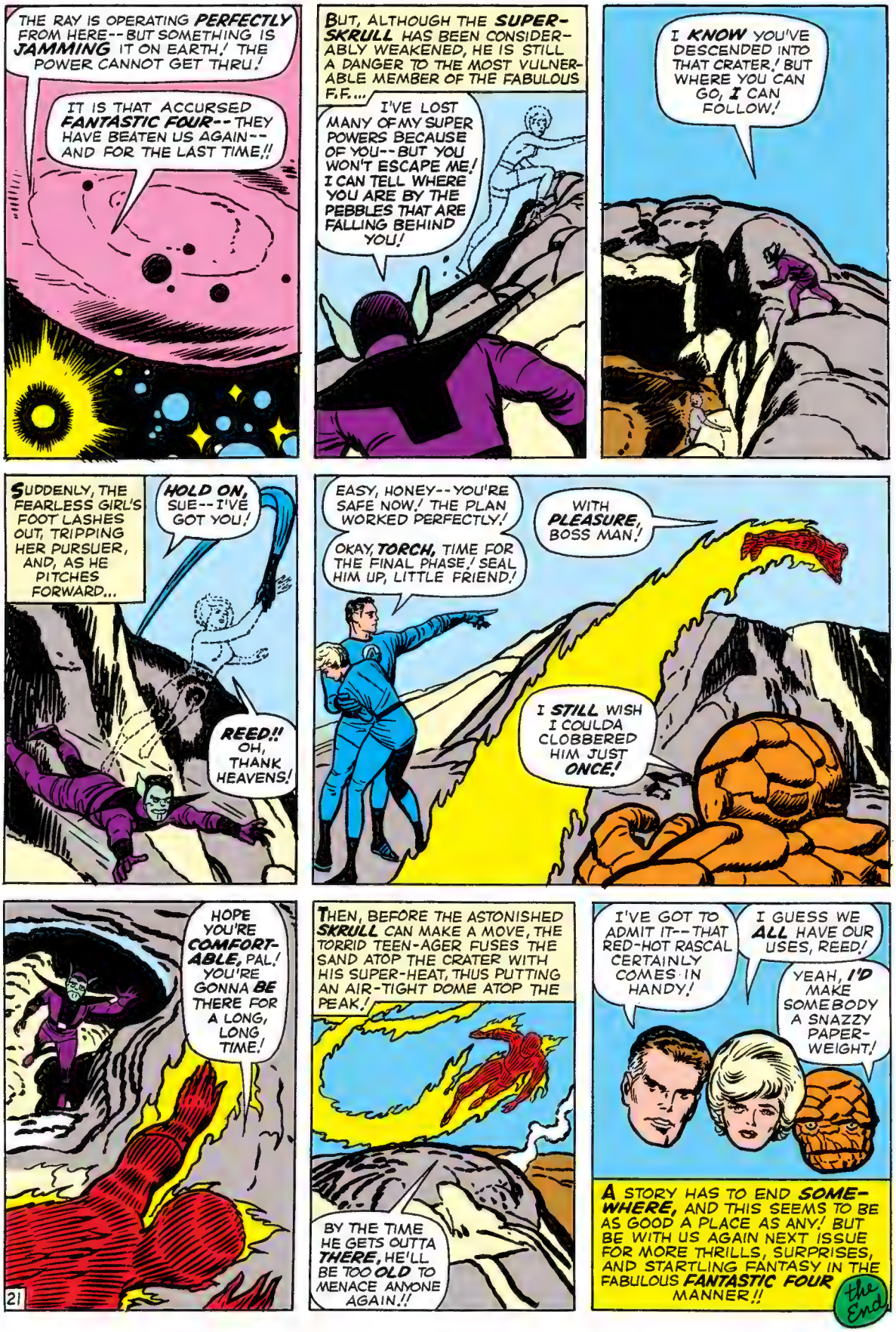

YOU'RE NEXT, TORCH! HOW RIDICULOUSLY EASY IT IS!
OHHH--


AND NOW FOR THE HELPLESS LEADER OF THE DEFEATED FANTASTIC FOUR!
I MUST STAND HERE AND TAKE IT--FOR THE SAKE OF SUE! IT'S HER ONLY CHANCE!
NOW...!

HEARING A FAINT SOUND BEHIND HIM, THE SUPER-SKRULL WHIRLS AROUND, BUT--TOO LATE!
WHA--??
I DID IT! THANKS TO BEN, JOHNNY, AND REED, I WAS ABLE TO REACH HIM!

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ME?? I FEEL STRANGE! --WEAK!
AS THOUGH MY STRENGTH IS BEING SAPPED!! IT-- CAN'T BE--!!

MAJESTY! SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE POWER RAY! IT--IT ISN'T MAKING CONTACT!!
IMPOSSIBLE! KEEP TRYING, YOU DOLT!!


THE RAY IS OPERATING PERFECTLY FROM HERE--BUT SOMETHING IS JAMMING IT ON EARTH! THE POWER CANNOT GET THRU!
IT IS THAT ACCURSED FANTASTIC FOUR--THEY HAVE BEATEN US AGAIN--AND FOR THE LAST TIME!!
BUT, ALTHOUGH THE SUPER-SKRULL HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY WEAKENED, HE IS STILL A DANGER TO THE MOST VULNERABLE MEMBER OF THE FABULOUS F.F....
I'VE LOST MANY OF MY SUPER POWERS BECAUSE OF YOU--BUT YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME! I CAN TELL WHERE YOU ARE BY THE PEBBLES THAT ARE FALLING BEHIND YOU!
I KNOW YOU'VE DESCENDED INTO THAT CRATER! BUT WHERE YOU CAN GO, I CAN FOLLOW!
SUDDENLY, THE FEARLESS GIRL'S FOOT LASHES OUT, TRIPPING HER PURSUER, AND, AS HE PITCHES FORWARD...
HOLD ON, SUE--I'VE GOT YOU!
REED!! OH, THANK HEAVENS!
EASY, HONEY--YOU'RE SAFE NOW! THE PLAN WORKED PERFECTLY!
OKAY, TORCH, TIME FOR THE FINAL PHASE! SEAL HIM UP, LITTLE FRIEND!
WITH PLEASURE, BOSS MAN!
I STILL WISH I COULDA CLOBBERED HIM JUST ONCE!
HOPE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE, PAL! YOU'RE GONNA BE THERE FOR A LONG, LONG TIME!
THEN, BEFORE THE ASTONISHED SKRULL CAN MAKE A MOVE, THE TORRID TEEN-AGER FUSES THE SAND ATOP THE CRATER WITH HIS SUPER-HEAT, THUS PUTTING AN AIR-TIGHT DOME ATOP THE PEAK!
BY THE TIME HE GETS OUTTA THERE, HE'LL BE TOO OLD TO MENACE ANYONE AGAIN!!
I'VE GOT TO ADMIT IT--THAT RED-HOT RASCAL CERTAINLY COMES IN HANDY!
I GUESS WE ALL HAVE OUR USES, REED!
YEAH, I'D MAKE SOMEBODY A SNAZZY PAPER-WEIGHT!
A STORY HAS TO END SOMEWHERE, AND THIS SEEMS TO BE AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY! BUT BE WITH US AGAIN NEXT ISSUE FOR MORE THRILLS, SURPRISES, AND STARTLING FANTASY IN THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR MANNER!!
the End
21

MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

IND.

19 OCT.

"AT THE MERCY OF RAMA-TUT"

THE PHAROAH FROM THE FUTURE!

I NEVER THOUGHT IT COULD HAPPEN! RAMA-TUT'S RAY GUN HAS MADE HELPLESS SLAVES OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

THERE, SUSAN STORM! THERE IS WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO DEFY ME--NO MATTER *WHAT* POWERS THEY POSSESS!

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The Fabulous FANTASTIC FOUR Find Themselves
"PRISONERS OF THE PHAROAH!"
WEAPONLESS! DEFENSELESS! TRAPPED IN THE LONG-DEAD MYSTERIOUS PAST, WITH ONLY THEIR OWN UNIQUE POWERS TO HELP THEM, THE FANTASTIC FOUR FACE THE MOST TOTALLY UNEXPECTED MENACE OF THEIR CAREER! SURPRISE FOLLOWS SURPRISE UNTIL YOU REACH THE MIND-STAGGERING CLIMAX WHICH AWAITS YOU WITHIN ...
THOUGH YOU COME FROM THE DISTANT FUTURE, I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU! AND I ALSO KNOW THAT ALL YOUR SUPER-POWERS ARE NO MATCH FOR MINE!
WRITTEN BY: STAN LEE
DRAWN BY: JACK KIRBY
INKING: DICK AYERS
LETTERING: S.ROSEN
1.

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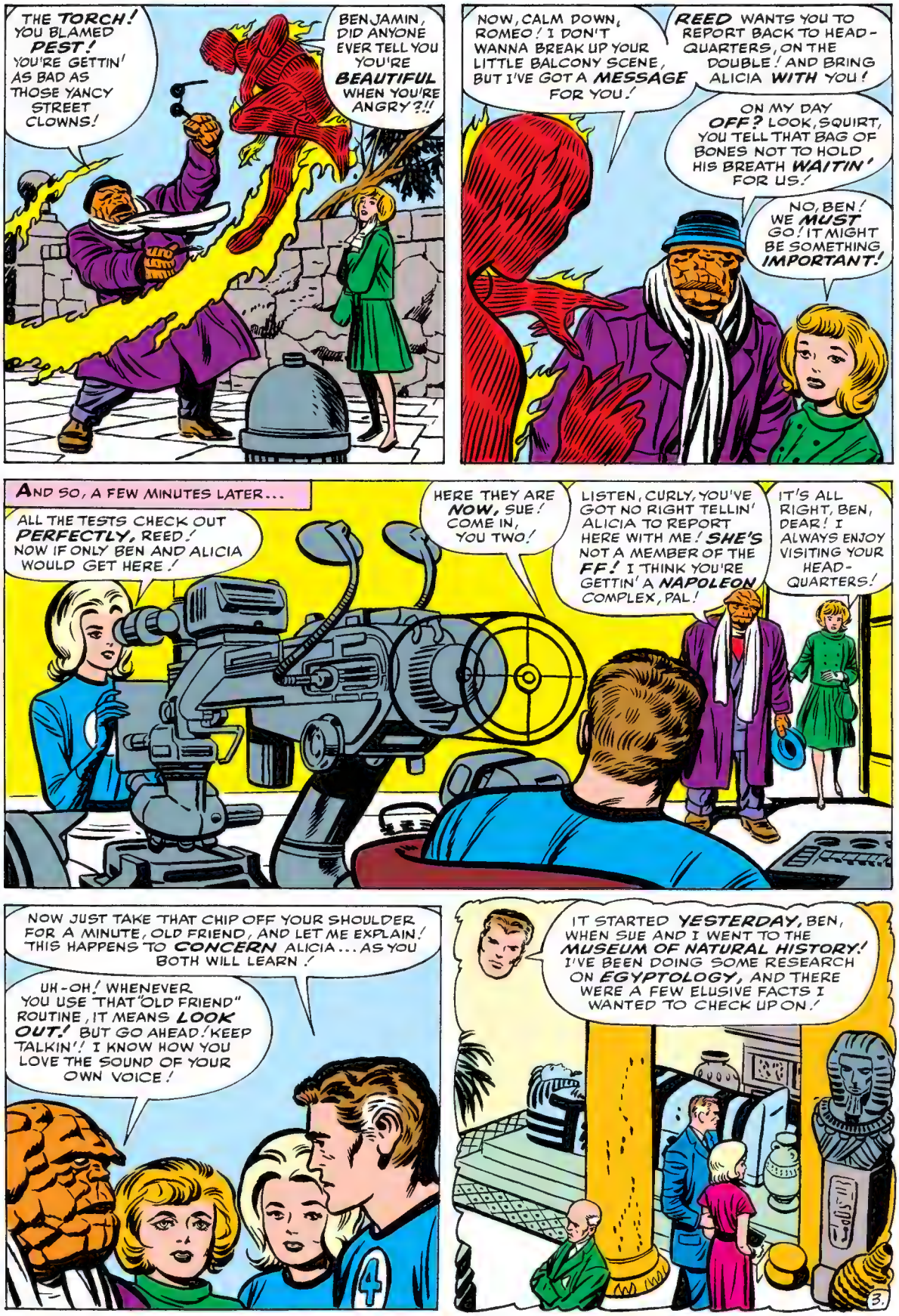
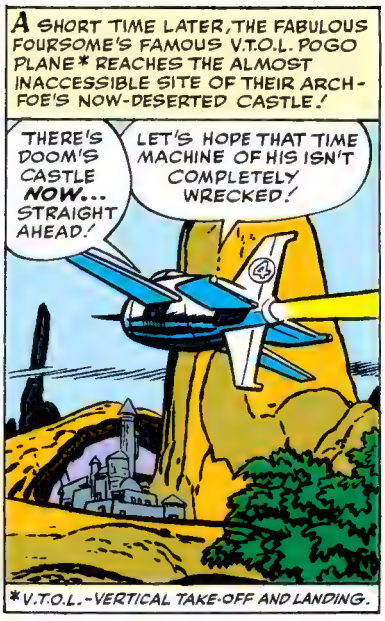
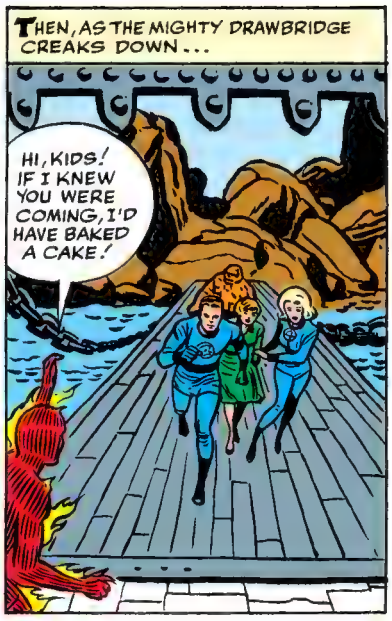
YOU ARE LOOKING AT ONE OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHTS IN THE WORLD ... THE SKYSCRAPERS OF NEW YORK, WITH THE SILENTLY SPEEDING FANTASTI-CAR GLIDING ABOVE THE TOWERING SPIRES!
STRANGE THAT THE THING DIDN'T RESPOND TO OUR SIGNAL FLARE! I WONDER WHERE HE CAN BE?
LET'S TRY ALICIA'S BUILDING... HE MIGHT BE VISITING HER!
WOULDN'T IT BE SOMETHIN' IF THEY ELOPED?
LIKE A GREAT GHOSTLY WILL-O-THE-WISP, THE MIGHTY MACHINE HOVERS MOMENTARILY OVER THE ROOF-TOP OF A NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING, AND THEN, SMOOTHLY, EFFORTLESSLY, IT DESCENDS...
THIS IS THE PLACE! PERHAPS ALICIA KNOWS WHERE HE IS.
THE APARTMENT'S EMPTY! WE'LL HAVE TO LOOK SOMEWHERE ELSE!
ISN'T THAT JUST LIKE A MAN? NEVER AROUND WHEN YOU WANT HIM!
SAME GOES FOR FEMALES, SIS! I'LL FLAME ON AND FLY OVER THE NEIGHBORHOOD! MAYBE THEY'RE OUT WALKING!
I WAS RIGHT! THERE THEY ARE NOW!
IT'S FUNNY! WHEN YOU SEE 'EM BOTH TOGETHER LIKE THAT, YOU KINDA FORGET THAT HE'S THE THING, AND THAT POOR ALICIA IS BLIND! TO ME, THEY LOOK LIKE ALMOST ANY LOVESICK COUPLE!
I THINK I'LL TRY ONE OF THESE NEW CORONAS THAT SOME OF MY FANS SENT ME! YOU DON'T MIND, DO YA, BABY?
OF COURSE NOT, BEN, DEAR! BUT I HOPE THEY DIDN'T COME FROM THE YANCY STREET GANG! THEY'RE LIABLE TO BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE!
NAH! THOSE CREEPS WOULDN'T DARE TRY ANYTHING LIKE THAT ON ME!
AW, WHAT DID YOU HAVE TA MENTION THEM FOR? I WAS JUST BEGINNIN' TO ENJOY MYSELF AND...
HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!!
2.

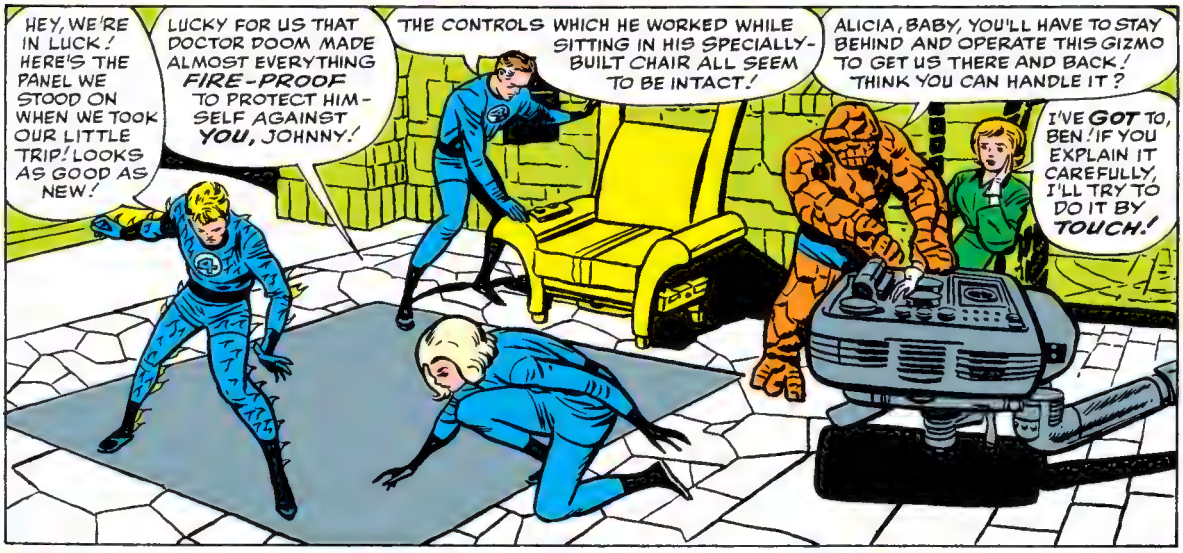

THE TORCH! YOU BLAMED PEST! YOU'RE GETTIN' AS BAD AS THOSE YANCY STREET CLOWNS!
BENJAMIN, DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY?!!
NOW, CALM DOWN, ROMEO! I DON'T WANNA BREAK UP YOUR LITTLE BALCONY SCENE, BUT I'VE GOT A MESSAGE FOR YOU!
REED WANTS YOU TO REPORT BACK TO HEAD-QUARTERS, ON THE DOUBLE! AND BRING ALICIA WITH YOU!
ON MY DAY OFF? LOOK, SQUIRT, YOU TELL THAT BAG OF BONES NOT TO HOLD HIS BREATH WAITIN' FOR US!
NO, BEN! WE MUST GO! IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
AND SO, A FEW MINUTES LATER...
ALL THE TESTS CHECK OUT PERFECTLY, REED! NOW IF ONLY BEN AND ALICIA WOULD GET HERE!
HERE THEY ARE NOW, SUE! COME IN, YOU TWO!
LISTEN, CURLY, YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT TELLIN' ALICIA TO REPORT HERE WITH ME! SHE'S NOT A MEMBER OF THE FF! I THINK YOU'RE GETTIN' A NAPOLEON COMPLEX, PAL!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, BEN, DEAR! I ALWAYS ENJOY VISITING YOUR HEAD-QUARTERS!
NOW JUST TAKE THAT CHIP OFF YOUR SHOULDER FOR A MINUTE, OLD FRIEND, AND LET ME EXPLAIN! THIS HAPPENS TO CONCERN ALICIA... AS YOU BOTH WILL LEARN!
UH-OH! WHENEVER YOU USE THAT "OLD FRIEND" ROUTINE, IT MEANS LOOK OUT! BUT GO AHEAD! KEEP TALKIN'! I KNOW HOW YOU LOVE THE SOUND OF YOUR OWN VOICE!
IT STARTED YESTERDAY, BEN, WHEN SUE AND I WENT TO THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY! I'VE BEEN DOING SOME RESEARCH ON EGYPTOLOGY, AND THERE WERE A FEW ELUSIVE FACTS I WANTED TO CHECK UP ON!
3.

IT'S STRANGE, SUE! THERE ARE A FEW YEARS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN HISTORY THAT ARE COMPLETELY UNACCOUNTED FOR BY HISTORIANS, AS THOUGH THOSE YEARS JUST DIDN'T EXIST! I WONDER IF ...
HMMM! LOOK AT THIS!
"AND THEN I SAW IT! ALMOST HIDDEN AMONG THE COUNTLESS HIEROGLYPHICS ON DISPLAY...THE ONE LITTLE DETAIL WHICH MADE ME DECIDE TO CALL YOU AND ALICIA IMMEDIATELY!"
THE SIGNS ARE UNMISTAKEABLE, SUE! IT SHOWS A BLIND PHARAOH ... A VIAL CONTAINING A RADIOACTIVE HERB ... AND THEN, THE SAME PHARAOH, ABLE TO SEE AGAIN!
IT CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING...AT A CERTAIN PERIOD IN EGYPTIAN HISTORY, ONE PHARAOH HAD FOUND A CURE FOR BLINDNESS! AND IT TOOK PLACE DURING THOSE STRANGELY MISSING YEARS!
IF YOU'RE SAYIN' WHAT I THINK YOU'RE SAYIN', REED, THEN THERE'S A CHANCE FOR ALICIA!
I HATE TO BUILD UP FALSE HOPES, BEN...AND YET...
BUT, WAIT A MINUTE! THIS IS NUTTY! HOW COULD THERE BE ANY RADIO-ACTIVE HERBS CENTURIES AGO? THERE WASN'T ANY ATOMIC ENERGY IN THOSE DAYS! ANYWAY, HOW CAN WE GET BACK INTO THE PAST?? IT AIN'T EXACTLY LIKE TAKING A SUBWAY OR A BUS!!
I CAN'T ANSWER THE FIRST QUESTION, BEN... BUT I THINK I CAN ANSWER THE SECOND!
REMEMBER OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH DOCTOR DOOM* MORE THAN A YEAR AGO?
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THAT ADVENTURE, DOOM'S CASTLE WAS ABANDONED BY HIM, BUT THERE IS STILL A CHANCE THAT THE MACHINE HE USED TO SEND US INTO THE PAST MAY STILL BE OPERATIONAL!
UR GALLERY OF SUPER-VILLAINS
DOCTOR DOOM
* F.F. #5 JULY...
REED, YOU OL' DICTIONARY-READIN', DOUBLE-TALKIN', RUBBER-BONED EGGHEAD! WHAT ARE WE STANDIN' AROUND JAWIN' FOR!? LET'S GO!!
BEN, YOU HOT-TEMPERED, LOUDMOUTHED, BEETLE-BRAINED GARGOYLE ... THAT'S WHAT I WAS WAITING FOR YOU TO SAY!!
4.

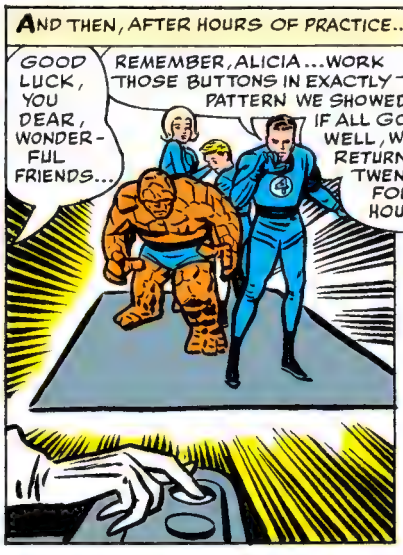

A SHORT TIME LATER, THE FABULOUS FOURSOME'S FAMOUS V.T.O.L. POGO PLANE* REACHES THE ALMOST INACCESSIBLE SITE OF THEIR ARCH-FOE'S NOW-DESERTED CASTLE!
THERE'S DOOM'S CASTLE NOW... STRAIGHT AHEAD!
LET'S HOPE THAT TIME MACHINE OF HIS ISN'T COMPLETELY WRECKED!
*V.T.O.L.-VERTICAL TAKE-OFF AND LANDING.

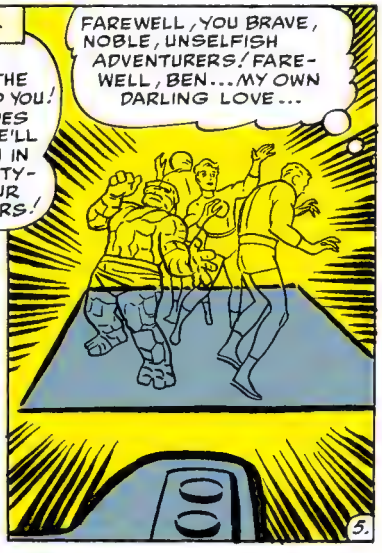
I'LL FLY OVER THE WALL AND LOWER THE DRAWBRIDGE FOR YOU THREE LANDLUBBERS!
EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE ALMOST AS DOOM LEFT IT!
YEAH, EXCEPT THAT OL' IRON-HEAD AIN'T AROUND!

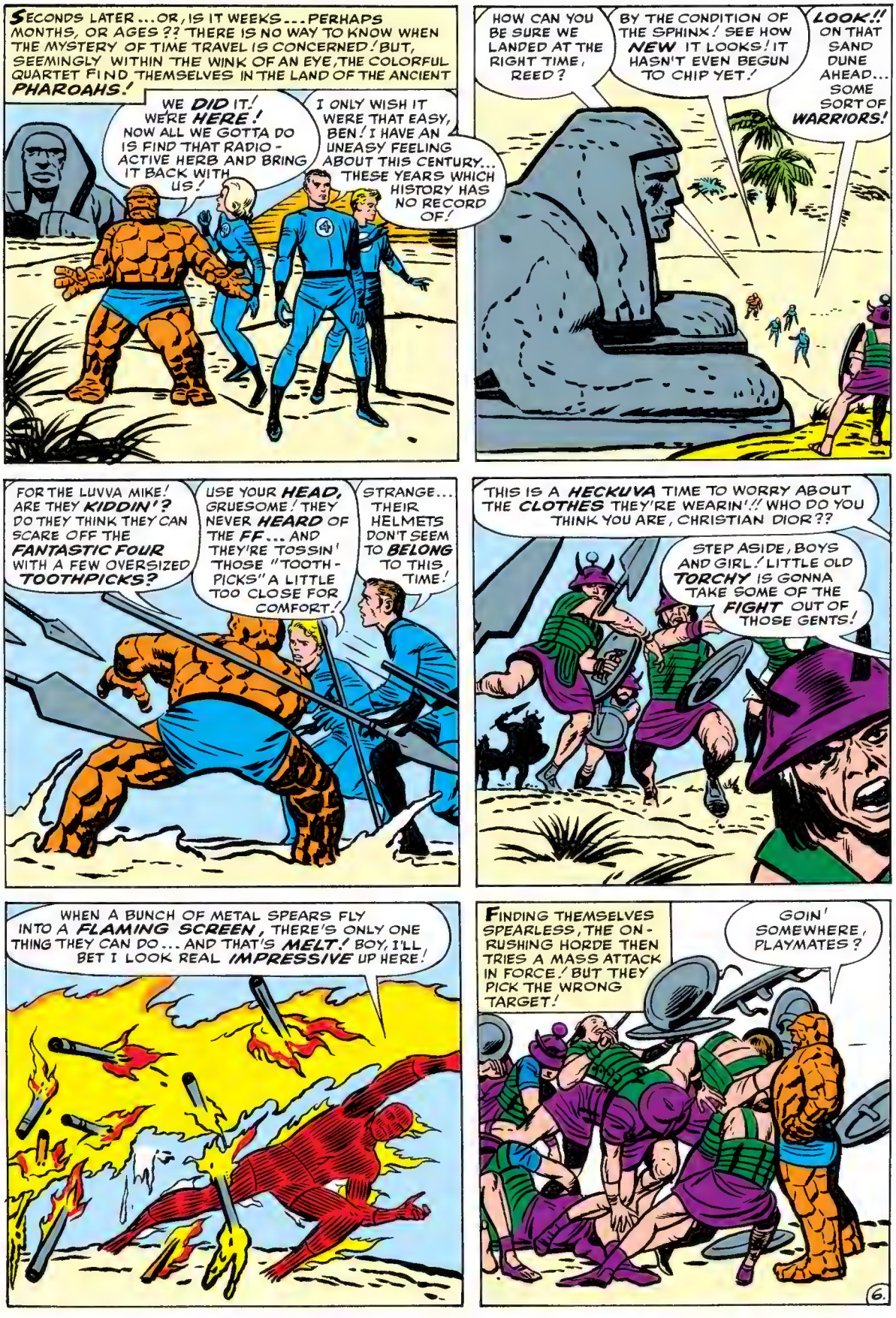

THEN, AS THE MIGHTY DRAWBRIDGE CREAKS DOWN...
HI, KIDS! IF I KNEW YOU WERE COMING, I'D HAVE BAKED A CAKE!

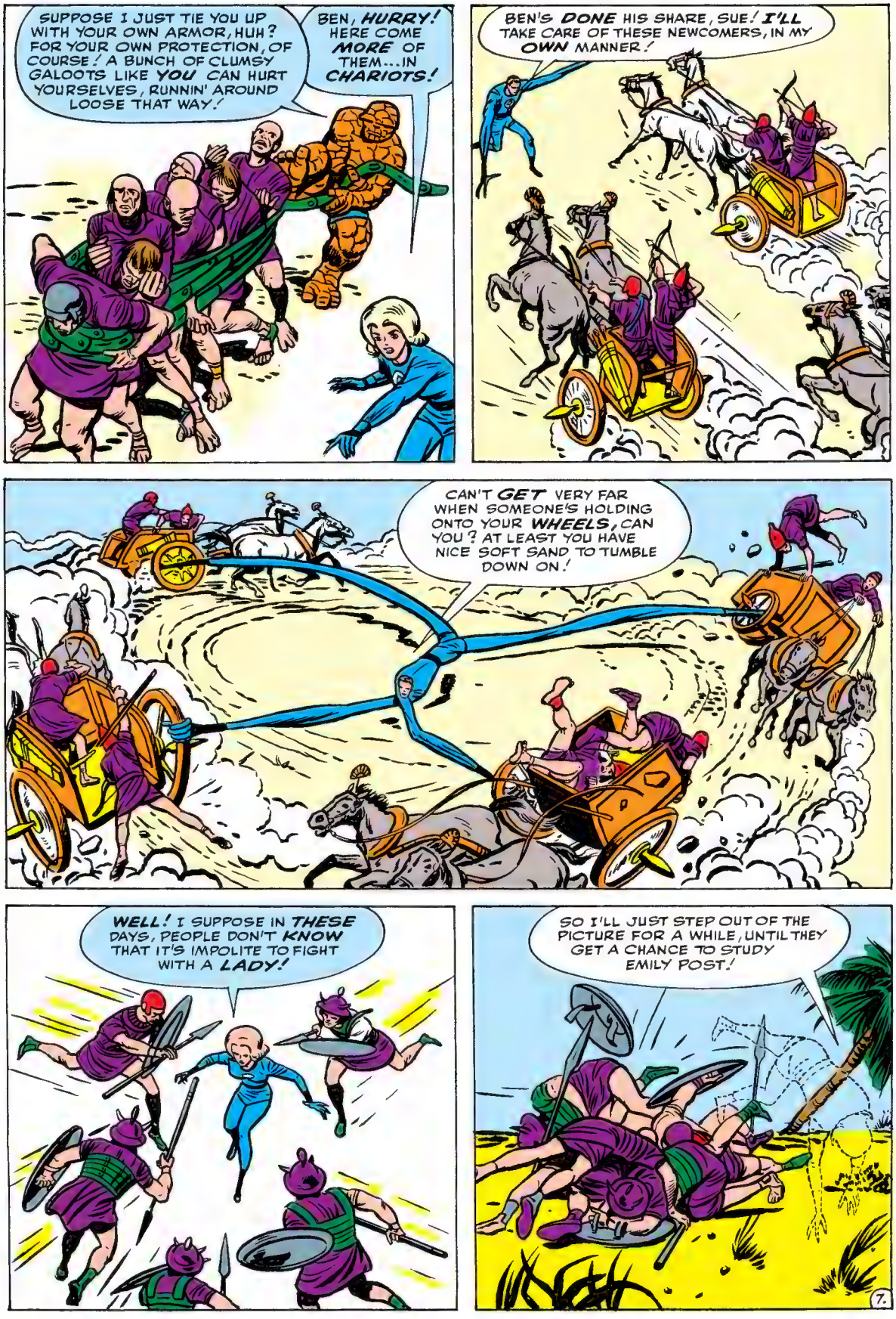

HEY, WE'RE IN LUCK! HERE'S THE PANEL WE STOOD ON WHEN WE TOOK OUR LITTLE TRIP! LOOKS AS GOOD AS NEW!
LUCKY FOR US THAT DOCTOR DOOM MADE ALMOST EVERYTHING FIRE-PROOF TO PROTECT HIMSELF AGAINST YOU, JOHNNY!
THE CONTROLS WHICH HE WORKED WHILE SITTING IN HIS SPECIALLY-BUILT CHAIR ALL SEEM TO BE INTACT!
ALICIA, BABY, YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY BEHIND AND OPERATE THIS GIZMO TO GET US THERE AND BACK! THINK YOU CAN HANDLE IT?
I'VE GOT TO, BEN! IF YOU EXPLAIN IT CAREFULLY, I'LL TRY TO DO IT BY TOUCH!

BUT, BEN...MY DARLING...IF THERE WILL BE ANY DANGER TO YOU... TO ANY OF YOU...THEN IT ISN'T WORTH IT! I COULDN'T BEAR IT IF...
FORGET IT, KID! DANGER IS OUR BUSINESS, LIKE THEY SAY IN THE MOVIES!


AND THEN, AFTER HOURS OF PRACTICE...
GOOD LUCK, YOU DEAR, WONDERFUL FRIENDS...
REMEMBER, ALICIA...WORK THOSE BUTTONS IN EXACTLY THE PATTERN WE SHOWED YOU! IF ALL GOES WELL, WE'LL RETURN IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!

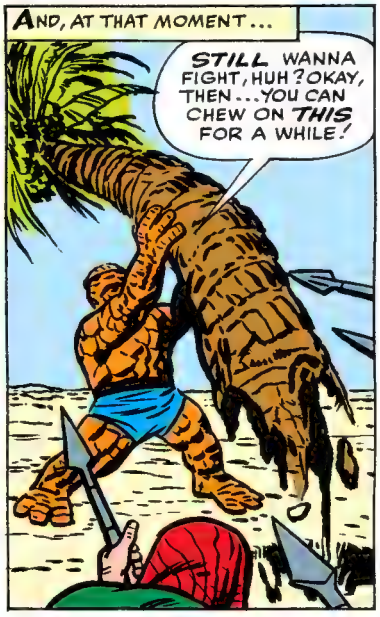

FAREWELL, YOU BRAVE, NOBLE, UNSELFISH ADVENTURERS! FAREWELL, BEN...MY OWN DARLING LOVE...
5.

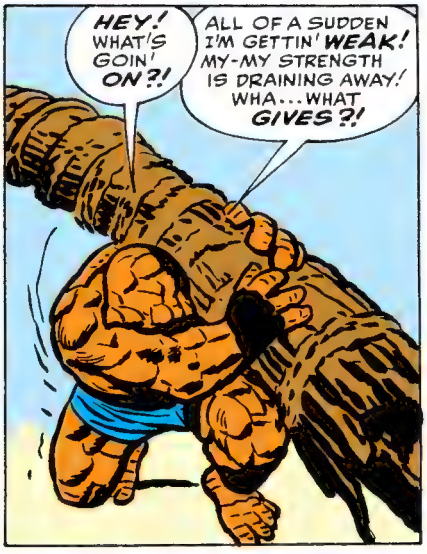

SECONDS LATER ... OR, IS IT WEEKS ... PERHAPS MONTHS, OR AGES ?? THERE IS NO WAY TO KNOW WHEN THE MYSTERY OF TIME TRAVEL IS CONCERNED! BUT, SEEMINGLY WITHIN THE WINK OF AN EYE, THE COLORFUL QUARTET FIND THEMSELVES IN THE LAND OF THE ANCIENT PHAROAHS!
WE DID IT! WE'RE HERE! NOW ALL WE GOTTA DO IS FIND THAT RADIO-ACTIVE HERB AND BRING IT BACK WITH US!
I ONLY WISH IT WERE THAT EASY, BEN! I HAVE AN UNEASY FEELING ABOUT THIS CENTURY... THESE YEARS WHICH HISTORY HAS NO RECORD OF!
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE WE LANDED AT THE RIGHT TIME, REED?
BY THE CONDITION OF THE SPHINX! SEE HOW NEW IT LOOKS! IT HASN'T EVEN BEGUN TO CHIP YET!
LOOK!! ON THAT SAND DUNE AHEAD... SOME SORT OF WARRIORS!
FOR THE LUVVA MIKE! ARE THEY KIDDIN'? DO THEY THINK THEY CAN SCARE OFF THE FANTASTIC FOUR WITH A FEW OVERSIZED TOOTHPICKS?
USE YOUR HEAD, GRUESOME! THEY NEVER HEARD OF THE FF... AND THEY'RE TOSSIN' THOSE "TOOTH-PICKS" A LITTLE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!
STRANGE... THEIR HELMETS DON'T SEEM TO BELONG TO THIS TIME!
THIS IS A HECKUVA TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE CLOTHES THEY'RE WEARIN'!! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, CHRISTIAN DIOR??
STEP ASIDE, BOYS AND GIRL! LITTLE OLD TORCHY IS GONNA TAKE SOME OF THE FIGHT OUT OF THOSE GENTS!
WHEN A BUNCH OF METAL SPEARS FLY INTO A FLAMING SCREEN, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THEY CAN DO... AND THAT'S MELT! BOY, I'LL BET I LOOK REAL IMPRESSIVE UP HERE!
FINDING THEMSELVES SPEARLESS, THE ON-RUSHING HORDE THEN TRIES A MASS ATTACK IN FORCE! BUT THEY PICK THE WRONG TARGET!
GOIN' SOMEWHERE, PLAYMATES?
6.

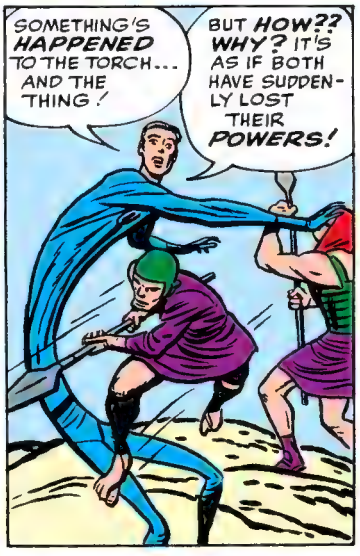

SUPPOSE I JUST TIE YOU UP WITH YOUR OWN ARMOR, HUH? FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION, OF COURSE! A BUNCH OF CLUMSY GALOOTS LIKE YOU CAN HURT YOURSELVES, RUNNIN' AROUND LOOSE THAT WAY!
BEN, HURRY! HERE COME MORE OF THEM...IN CHARIOTS!
BEN'S DONE HIS SHARE, SUE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THESE NEWCOMERS, IN MY OWN MANNER!
CAN'T GET VERY FAR WHEN SOMEONE'S HOLDING ONTO YOUR WHEELS, CAN YOU? AT LEAST YOU HAVE NICE SOFT SAND TO TUMBLE DOWN ON!
WELL! I SUPPOSE IN THESE DAYS, PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THAT IT'S IMPOLITE TO FIGHT WITH A LADY!
SO I'LL JUST STEP OUT OF THE PICTURE FOR A WHILE, UNTIL THEY GET A CHANCE TO STUDY EMILY POST!

HAH! LOOK AT 'EM RUN! GUESS WE MADE THINGS TOO HOT FOR 'EM, ALL RIGHT!

BUT, THE TORCH'S EXULTATION IS SHORT-LIVED, FOR, THE NEXT INSTANT...
FLAMIN' FIRE-BALLS!! WHAT HAPPENED?
SOME SORT OF SUDDEN AIR VACUUM IS DOUSING MY FLAME!


AND, AT THAT MOMENT...
STILL WANNA FIGHT, HUH? OKAY, THEN...YOU CAN CHEW ON THIS FOR A WHILE!


HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!
ALL OF A SUDDEN I'M GETTIN' WEAK! MY-MY STRENGTH IS DRAINING AWAY! WHA...WHAT GIVES?!


SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO THE TORCH... AND THE THING!
BUT HOW?? WHY? IT'S AS IF BOTH HAVE SUDDENLY LOST THEIR POWERS!

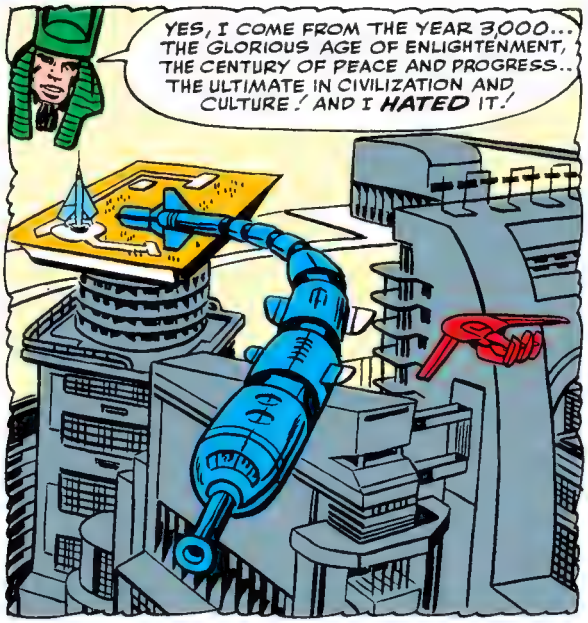
NOW IT'S HAPPENING TO ME, TOO!
I'M LOSING MY RESILIENCY!! CAN'T STRETCH ANY MORE!!

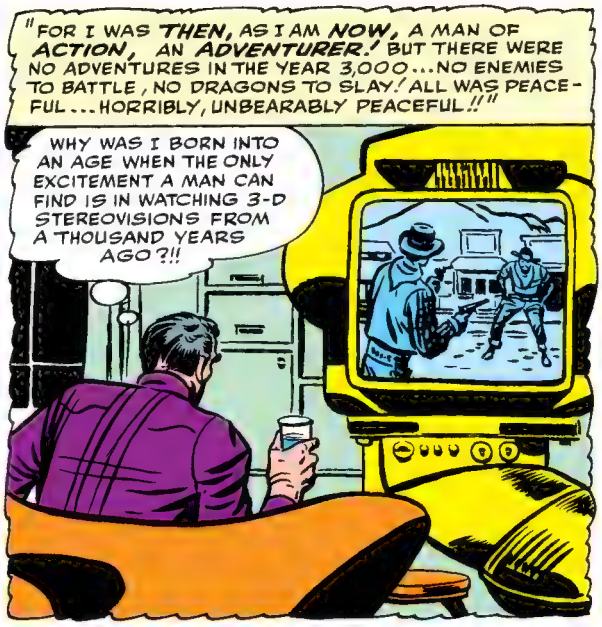
SUE! BE CAREFUL! SOMETHING'S TERRIBLY WRONG HERE! STAY INVISIBLE...DON'T TAKE CHANCES...!!
REED! I-I NEVER SAW YOU LIKE THIS! AND JOHNNY, AND BEN... IT'S AS THOUGH YOU'VE ALL BEEN DEFEATED... BY SOME UNSEEN FORCE!!

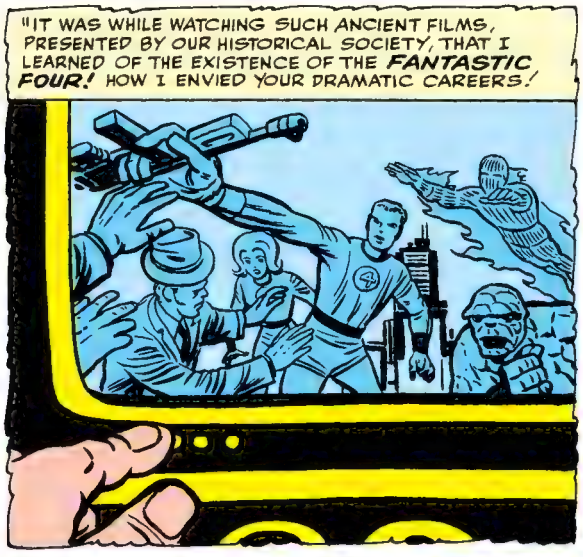
OH! NOW IT'S AFFECTING ME! I CAN FEEL IT!
I'M BECOMING VISIBLE! CAN'T HELP MYSELF!!

I FEEL SO...WEAK! LIKE THE OTHERS! HEAR THE WARRIORS COMING...CAN'T DEFEND OURSELVES...IT'S MAD! IMPOSSIBLE! AND YET...WE'RE BEATEN!!
8.

BUT THE FABULOUS FOURSOME HAVE STILL MORE STAGGERING SURPRISES IN STORE! FOR, WHEN THEY REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS AGAIN, THEY FIND...
WHA... WHAT HAPPENED TO US?? WHERE ARE WE?
WE'VE BEEN BROUGHT TO A THRONE ROOM! WE'RE PRISONERS OF...THE PHAROAH!
ON YOUR FEET, CAPTIVES! YOU ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE AWESOME RAMA-TUT, KING OF KINGS, MASTER OF MEN, LORD OF THE SEVEN SUNS!
NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHO I AM, THERE IS NO NEED TO INTRODUCE YOURSELVES... FOR I AM QUITE FAMILIAR WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
YOU KNOW US?!
AHH! I THOUGHT THAT REMARK WOULD STARTLE YOU!
REED, SOMETHING IS WRONG! HOW CAN HE KNOW ABOUT US... A THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE WE WERE BORN?
AND HE'S TALKING ENGLISH!! BEFORE THE LANGUAGE WAS EVEN INVENTED! THIS IS NUTTY!
CAN WE HAVE LANDED IN THE WRONG YEAR?? CAN THIS BE...THE FUTURE??
NO! IT IS THE PAST! THE SECRET LIES WITH RAMA-TUT HIMSELF!
4
YOUR MIND IS INDEED AS SHARP AS THE ANCIENT LEGENDS CLAIMED! YES, THIS IS THE PAST!
BUT I AM NOT A PART OF IT! AS YOU HAVE OBVIOUSLY GUESSED, NO ANCIENT PHAROAH FROM PRIMITIVE TIMES COULD HAVE THE POWER TO SUBDUE THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
THEN, THERE IS ONLY ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER, INCREDIBLE THOUGH IT MAY BE...
OF COURSE! THIS IS THE WEAPON WHICH SAPPED YOUR POWERS, WHICH MADE YOU MY CAPTIVES!
THIS ULTRA-DIODE RAY, INVENTED IN THE YEAR 3,000... ONE THOUSAND YEARS FURTHER IN THE FUTURE THAN YOUR OWN CENTURY!
THEN...YOU TOO ARE.. A TIME TRAVELER!!
9.

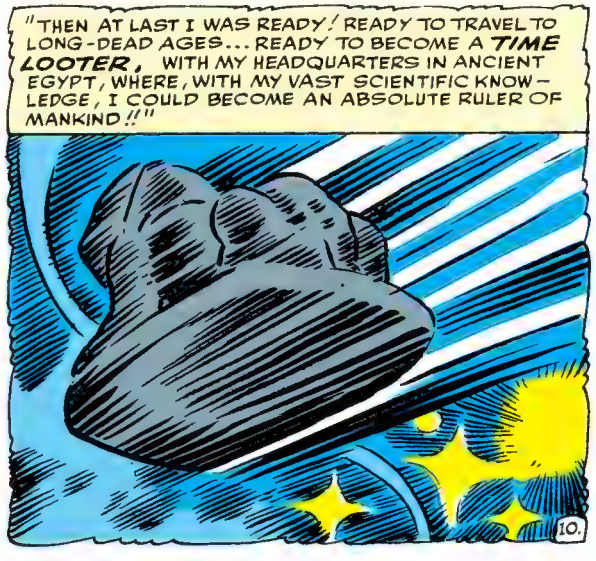

YES, I COME FROM THE YEAR 3,000... THE GLORIOUS AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT, THE CENTURY OF PEACE AND PROGRESS.. THE ULTIMATE IN CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE! AND I HATED IT!


"FOR I WAS THEN, AS I AM NOW, A MAN OF ACTION, AN ADVENTURER! BUT THERE WERE NO ADVENTURES IN THE YEAR 3,000...NO ENEMIES TO BATTLE, NO DRAGONS TO SLAY! ALL WAS PEACEFUL...HORRIBLY, UNBEARABLY PEACEFUL!!"
WHY WAS I BORN INTO AN AGE WHEN THE ONLY EXCITEMENT A MAN CAN FIND IS IN WATCHING 3-D STEREOVISIONS FROM A THOUSAND YEARS AGO?!!

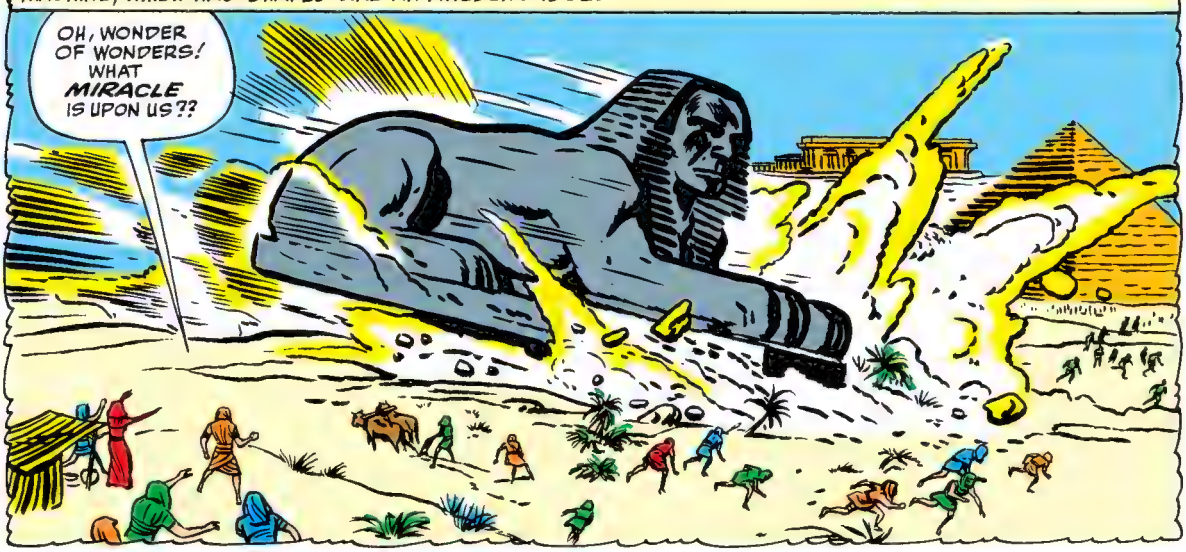

"IT WAS WHILE WATCHING SUCH ANCIENT FILMS, PRESENTED BY OUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY, THAT I LEARNED OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR! HOW I ENVIED YOUR DRAMATIC CAREERS!

"THEN, ONE DAY, WHILE VISITING THE RUINS OF AN AMAZING ANCESTOR OF MINE, I CAME UPON WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIS GREATEST INVENTION...A TIME MACHINE!"
PART OF THE MACHINE STILL REMAINS...AND HERE ARE THE PLANS FOR ITS OPERATION!
IT WOULD BE SIMPLE FOR ME TO RECREATE IT AND USE IT FOR MY OWN PURPOSES!

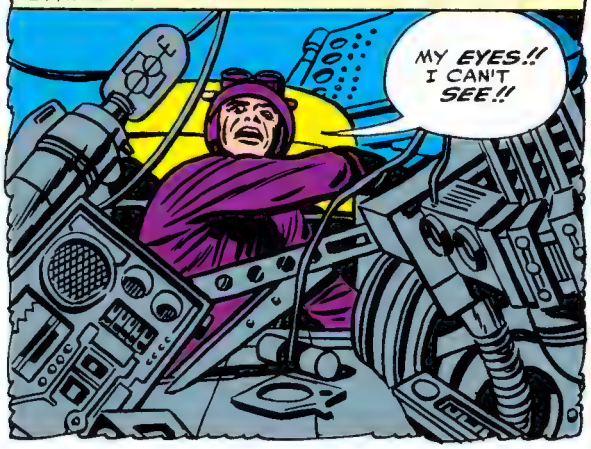
"I DEVOTED YEARS TO THE BUILDING OF THAT TIME MACHINE, FROM MY ANCESTOR'S PLANS! BUT, KNOWING THE SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS OF PEOPLE IN BYGONE DAYS, I SHAPED IT IN THE FORM OF A STRANGE CREATURE, IN THE FORM OF AN IDOL!"


"THEN AT LAST I WAS READY! READY TO TRAVEL TO LONG-DEAD AGES... READY TO BECOME A TIME LOOTER, WITH MY HEADQUARTERS IN ANCIENT EGYPT, WHERE, WITH MY VAST SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, I COULD BECOME AN ABSOLUTE RULER OF MANKIND!!"

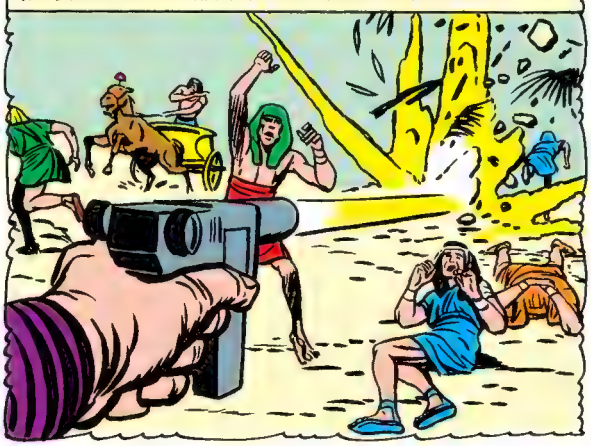
"AND SO I TRAVELLED BACK INTO THE DIM PAST, BACK TO THE LAND OF ANCIENT EGYPT, IN MY MARVELOUS TIME MACHINE, WHICH WAS SHAPED LIKE AN AWESOME IDOL.'"



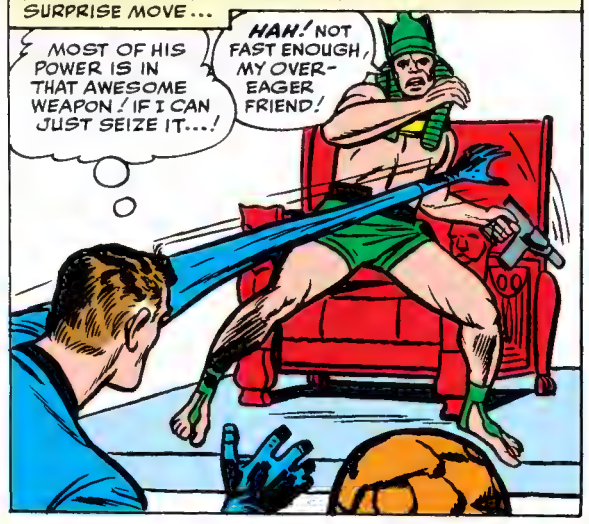
"BUT, DUE TO A CARELESS MISCALCULATION ON MY PART, THE MACHINE WAS DAMAGED IN LANDING, SO THAT I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LEAVE THIS PRIMITIVE CENTURY! ALSO, I SUFFERED A TERRIBLE INJURY AS I CRASHED!

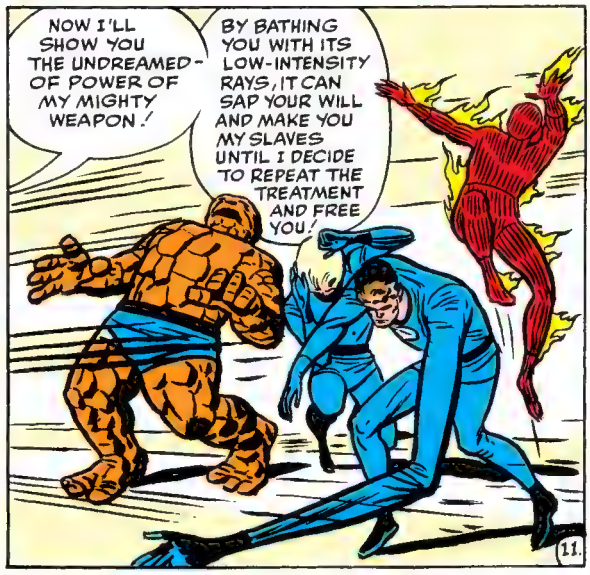


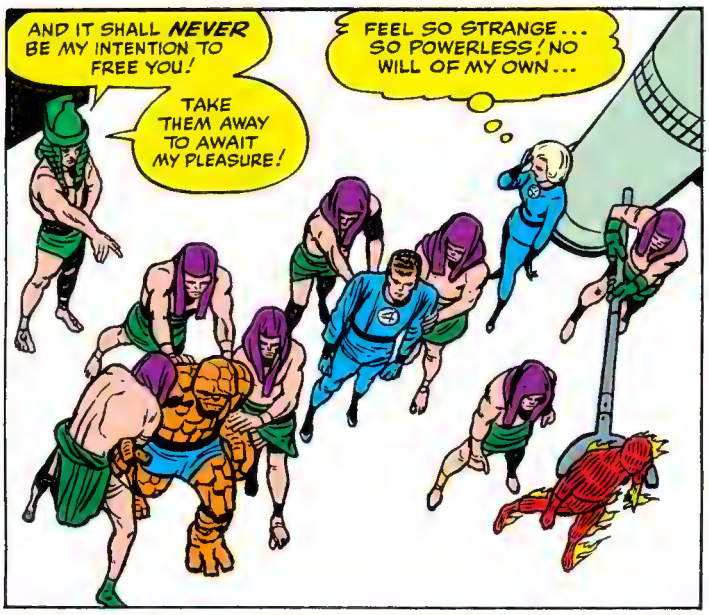
"BUT, FIRING BLINDLY AT THE DAZED NATIVES, I MADE THEM MY SLAVES! THEY OBTAINED A RARE HERB FOR ME WHICH, AFFECTED BY THE RADIATION FROM MY DAMAGED MACHINE, HAD THE POWER TO RESTORE MY EYESIGHT! I HAVE RULED HERE EVER SINCE!'"



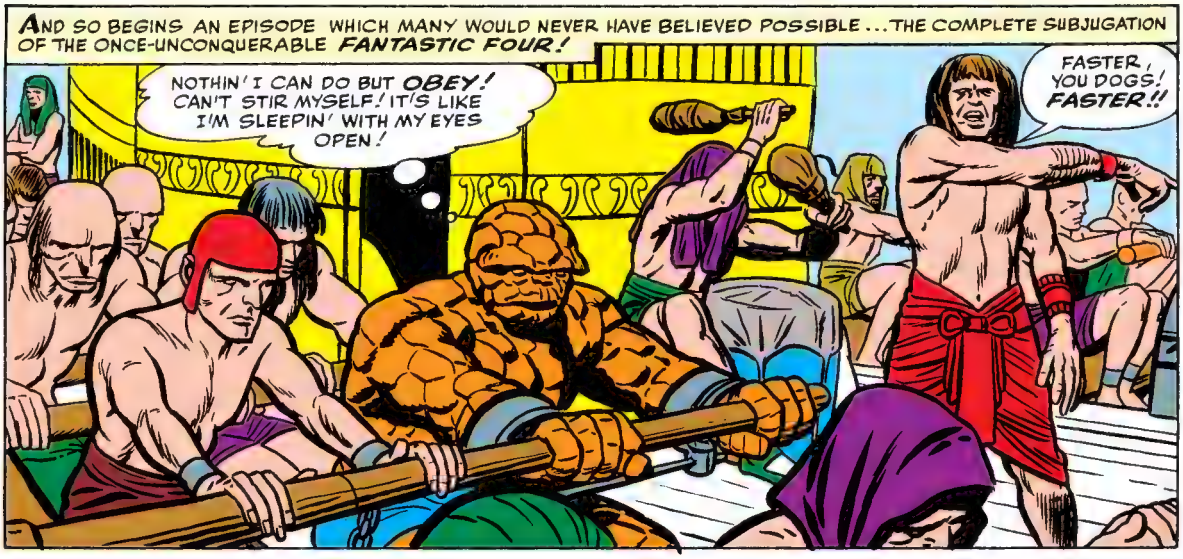
AS THE PHAROAH FROM THE FUTURE ENDS HIS STARTLING TALE, MR. FANTASTIC MAKES A SUDDEN SURPRISE MOVE...

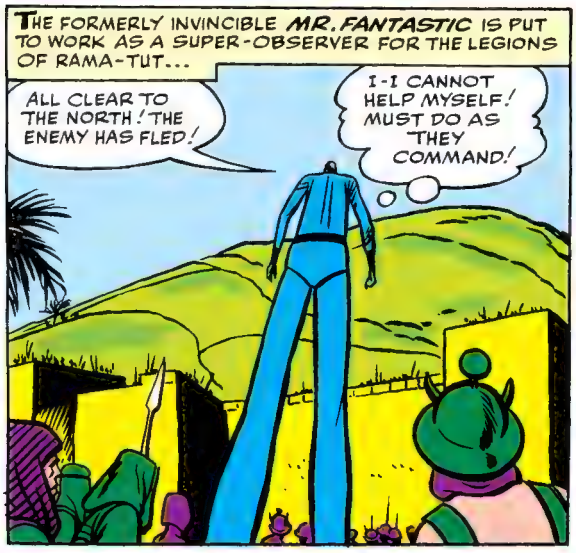


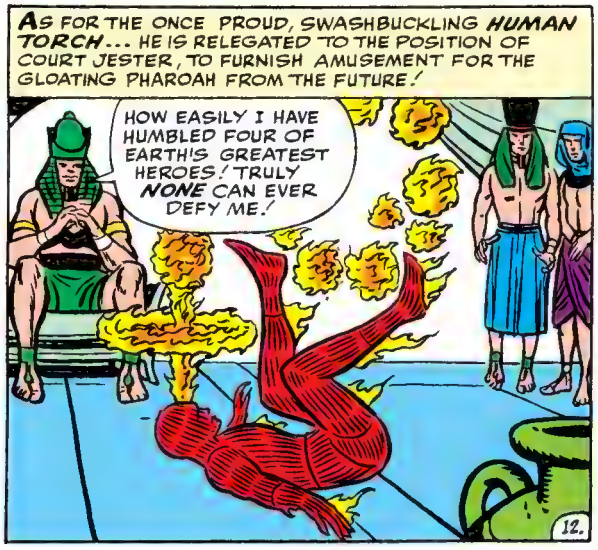

NOW I'LL SHOW YOU THE UNDREAMED-OF POWER OF MY MIGHTY WEAPON!
BY BATHING YOU WITH ITS LOW-INTENSITY RAYS, IT CAN SAP YOUR WILL AND MAKE YOU MY SLAVES UNTIL I DECIDE TO REPEAT THE TREATMENT AND FREE YOU!

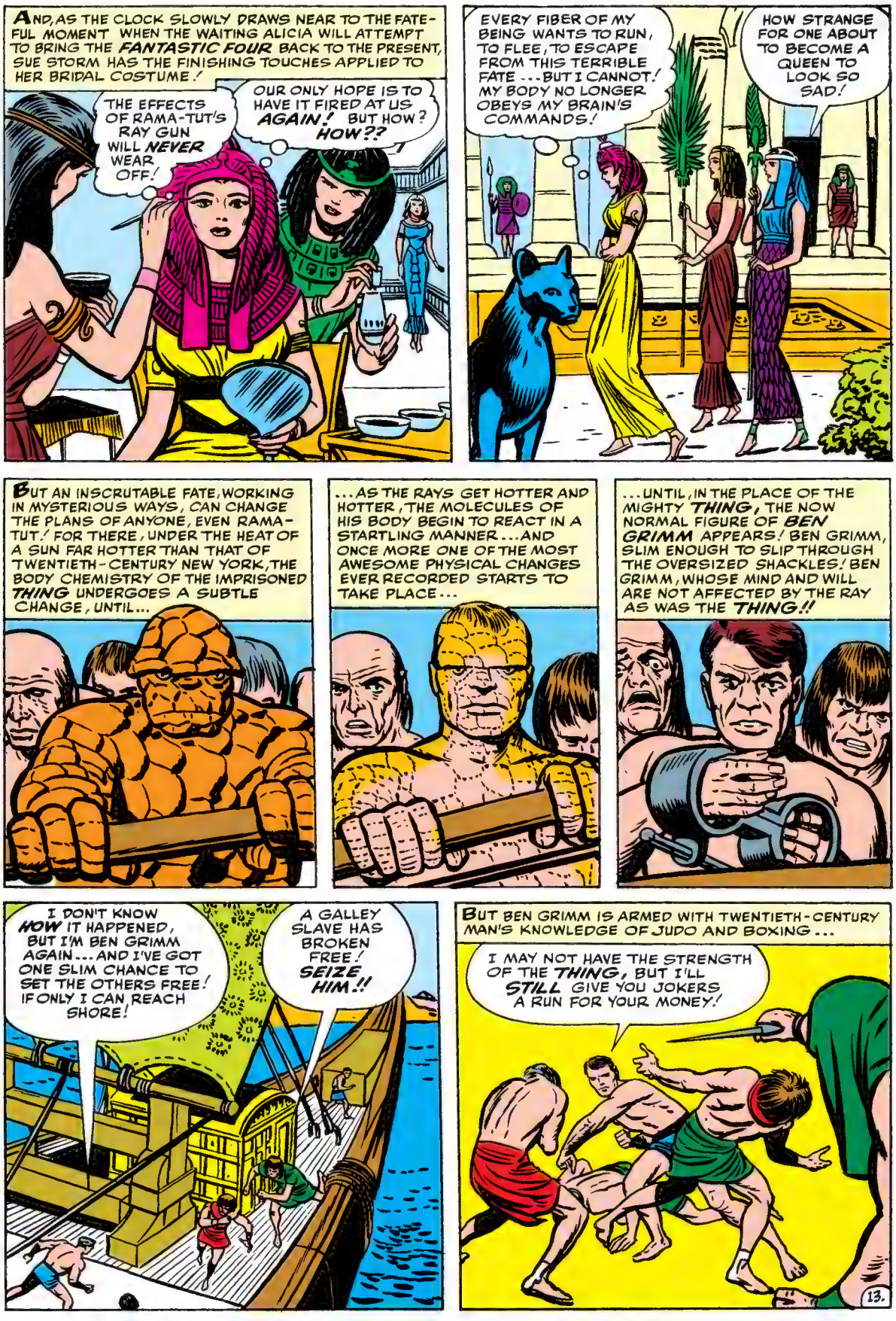

AND IT SHALL NEVER BE MY INTENTION TO FREE YOU!
TAKE THEM AWAY TO AWAIT MY PLEASURE!
I FEEL SO STRANGE... SO POWERLESS! NO WILL OF MY OWN...

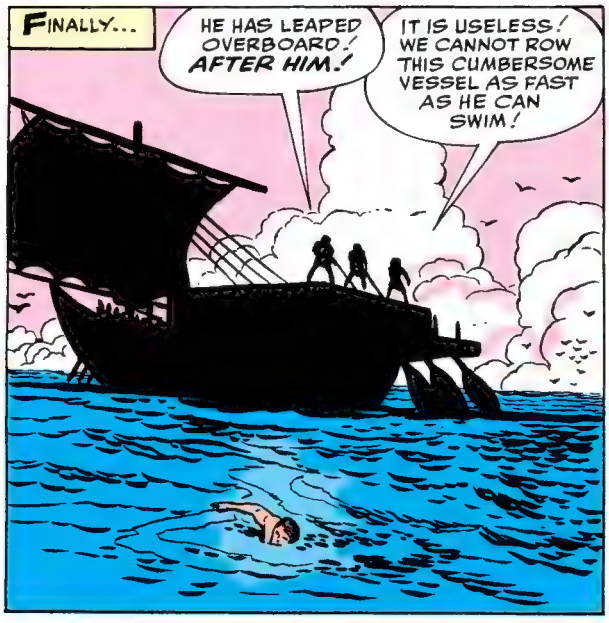
BUT YOU SHALL REMAIN AT MY SIDE! FOR YOU HAVE TRAVELLED ALL THESE CENTURIES BACK THROUGH TIME... AND YOU SHALL BE REWARDED... BY BECOMING MY QUEEN!


AND SO BEGINS AN EPISODE WHICH MANY WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED POSSIBLE... THE COMPLETE SUBJUGATION OF THE ONCE-UNCONQUERABLE FANTASTIC FOUR!
NOTHIN' I CAN DO BUT OBEY! CAN'T STIR MYSELF! IT'S LIKE I'M SLEEPIN' WITH MY EYES OPEN!
FASTER, YOU DOGS! FASTER!!

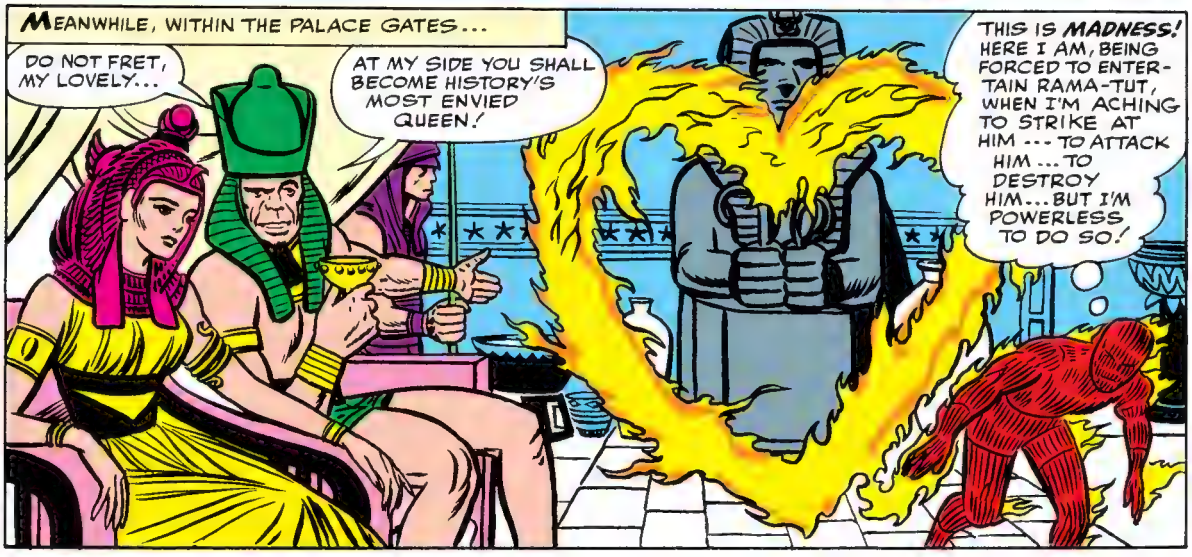

THE FORMERLY INVINCIBLE MR. FANTASTIC IS PUT TO WORK AS A SUPER-OBSERVER FOR THE LEGIONS OF RAMA-TUT...
ALL CLEAR TO THE NORTH! THE ENEMY HAS FLED!
I-I CANNOT HELP MYSELF! MUST DO AS THEY COMMAND!

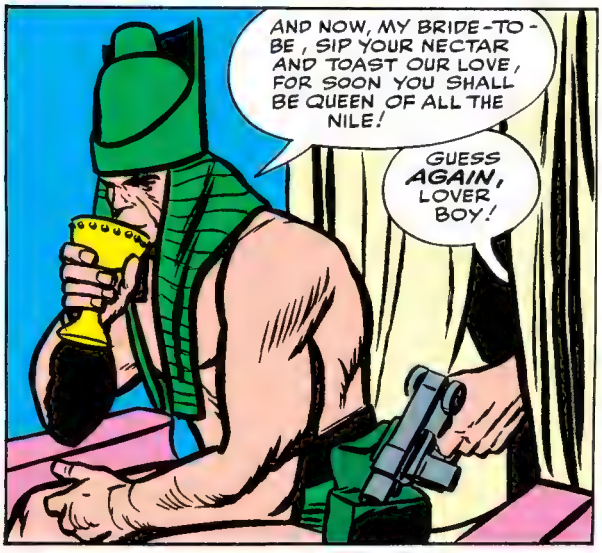

AS FOR THE ONCE PROUD, SWASHBUCKLING HUMAN TORCH... HE IS RELEGATED TO THE POSITION OF COURT JESTER, TO FURNISH AMUSEMENT FOR THE GLOATING PHAROAH FROM THE FUTURE!
HOW EASILY I HAVE HUMBLED FOUR OF EARTH'S GREATEST HEROES! TRULY NONE CAN EVER DEFY ME!

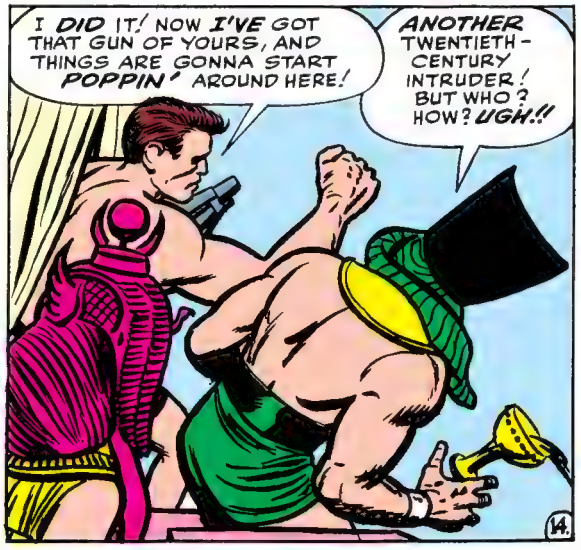

AND, AS THE CLOCK SLOWLY DRAWS NEAR TO THE FATEFUL MOMENT WHEN THE WAITING ALICIA WILL ATTEMPT TO BRING THE FANTASTIC FOUR BACK TO THE PRESENT, SUE STORM HAS THE FINISHING TOUCHES APPLIED TO HER BRIDAL COSTUME!
THE EFFECTS OF RAMA-TUT'S RAY GUN WILL NEVER WEAR OFF!
OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO HAVE IT FIRED AT US AGAIN! BUT HOW? HOW??
EVERY FIBER OF MY BEING WANTS TO RUN, TO FLEE, TO ESCAPE FROM THIS TERRIBLE FATE ... BUT I CANNOT! MY BODY NO LONGER OBEYS MY BRAIN'S COMMANDS!
HOW STRANGE FOR ONE ABOUT TO BECOME A QUEEN TO LOOK SO SAD!
BUT AN INSCRUTABLE FATE, WORKING IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS, CAN CHANGE THE PLANS OF ANYONE, EVEN RAMA-TUT! FOR THERE, UNDER THE HEAT OF A SUN FAR HOTTER THAN THAT OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY NEW YORK, THE BODY CHEMISTRY OF THE IMPRISONED THING UNDERGOES A SUBTLE CHANGE, UNTIL...
...AS THE RAYS GET HOTTER AND HOTTER, THE MOLECULES OF HIS BODY BEGIN TO REACT IN A STARTLING MANNER ... AND ONCE MORE ONE OF THE MOST AWESOME PHYSICAL CHANGES EVER RECORDED STARTS TO TAKE PLACE...
...UNTIL, IN THE PLACE OF THE MIGHTY THING, THE NOW NORMAL FIGURE OF BEN GRIMM APPEARS! BEN GRIMM, SLIM ENOUGH TO SLIP THROUGH THE OVERSIZED SHACKLES! BEN GRIMM, WHOSE MIND AND WILL ARE NOT AFFECTED BY THE RAY AS WAS THE THING!!
I DON'T KNOW HOW IT HAPPENED, BUT I'M BEN GRIMM AGAIN ... AND I'VE GOT ONE SLIM CHANCE TO SET THE OTHERS FREE! IF ONLY I CAN REACH SHORE!
A GALLEY SLAVE HAS BROKEN FREE! SEIZE HIM!!
BUT BEN GRIMM IS ARMED WITH TWENTIETH-CENTURY MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF JUDO AND BOXING ...
I MAY NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH OF THE THING, BUT I'LL STILL GIVE YOU JOKERS A RUN FOR YOUR MONEY!
13.


FINALLY...
HE HAS LEAPED OVERBOARD! AFTER HIM!
IT IS USELESS! WE CANNOT ROW THIS CUMBERSOME VESSEL AS FAST AS HE CAN SWIM!

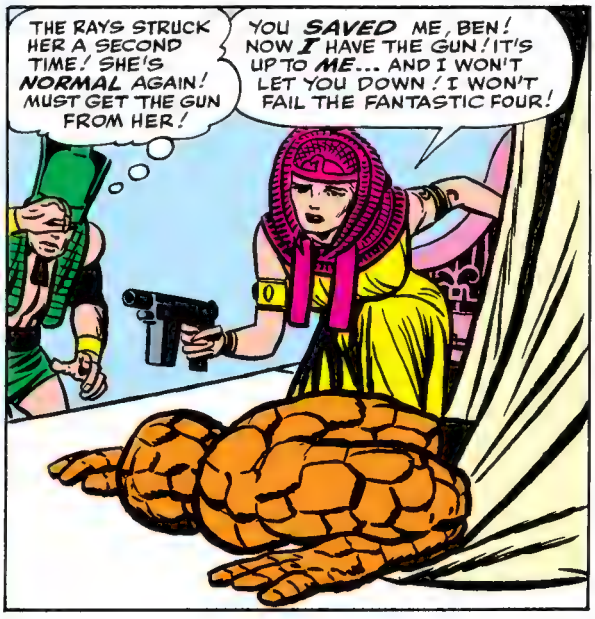
REACHING SHORE SAFELY, THE FRANTIC BEN GRIMM SEIZES A NEARBY CHARIOT IN ONE LAST DESPERATE EFFORT...
NOW IF I CAN JUST MAKE IT TO THE PALACE OF RAMA-TUT!

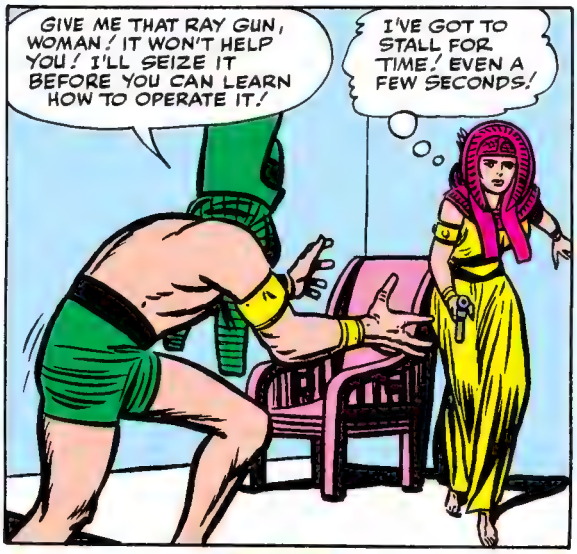

MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE PALACE GATES...
DO NOT FRET, MY LOVELY...
AT MY SIDE YOU SHALL BECOME HISTORY'S MOST ENVIED QUEEN!
THIS IS MADNESS! HERE I AM, BEING FORCED TO ENTERTAIN RAMA-TUT, WHEN I'M ACHING TO STRIKE AT HIM --- TO ATTACK HIM ... TO DESTROY HIM... BUT I'M POWERLESS TO DO SO!

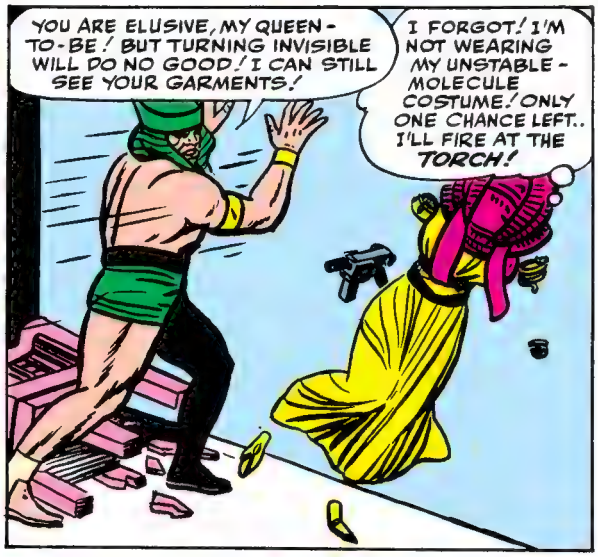

AND NOW, MY BRIDE-TO-BE, SIP YOUR NECTAR AND TOAST OUR LOVE, FOR SOON YOU SHALL BE QUEEN OF ALL THE NILE!
GUESS AGAIN, LOVER BOY!

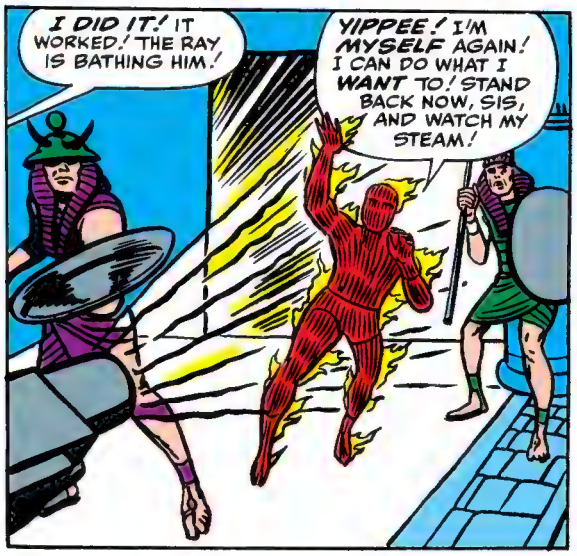

I DID IT! NOW I'VE GOT THAT GUN OF YOURS, AND THINGS ARE GONNA START POPPIN' AROUND HERE!
ANOTHER TWENTIETH-CENTURY INTRUDER! BUT WHO? HOW? UGH!!

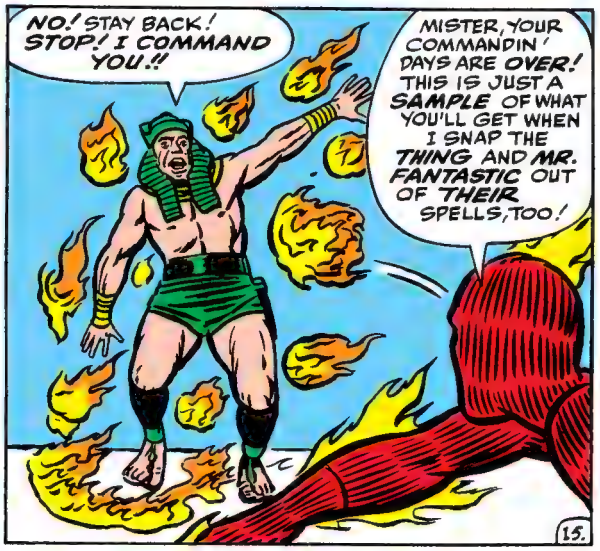
BUT, ONCE AWAY FROM THE BURNING RAYS OF THE PRIMITIVE DESERT SUN, BEN GRIMM BEGINS TO REVERT TO HIS OTHER FORM... AND, AS HE SLOWLY TURNS INTO THE THING, HE FEELS HIMSELF AGAIN COMING UNDER THE WILL-SAPPING INFLUENCE OF THE PHAROAH'S RAY GUN! AND SO...
MUST FREE SUE BEFORE I GO UNDER... CAN'T LET MY ESCAPE HAVE BEEN IN VAIN! MUSTN'T MISS... JUST ONE BLAST... JUST ONE...

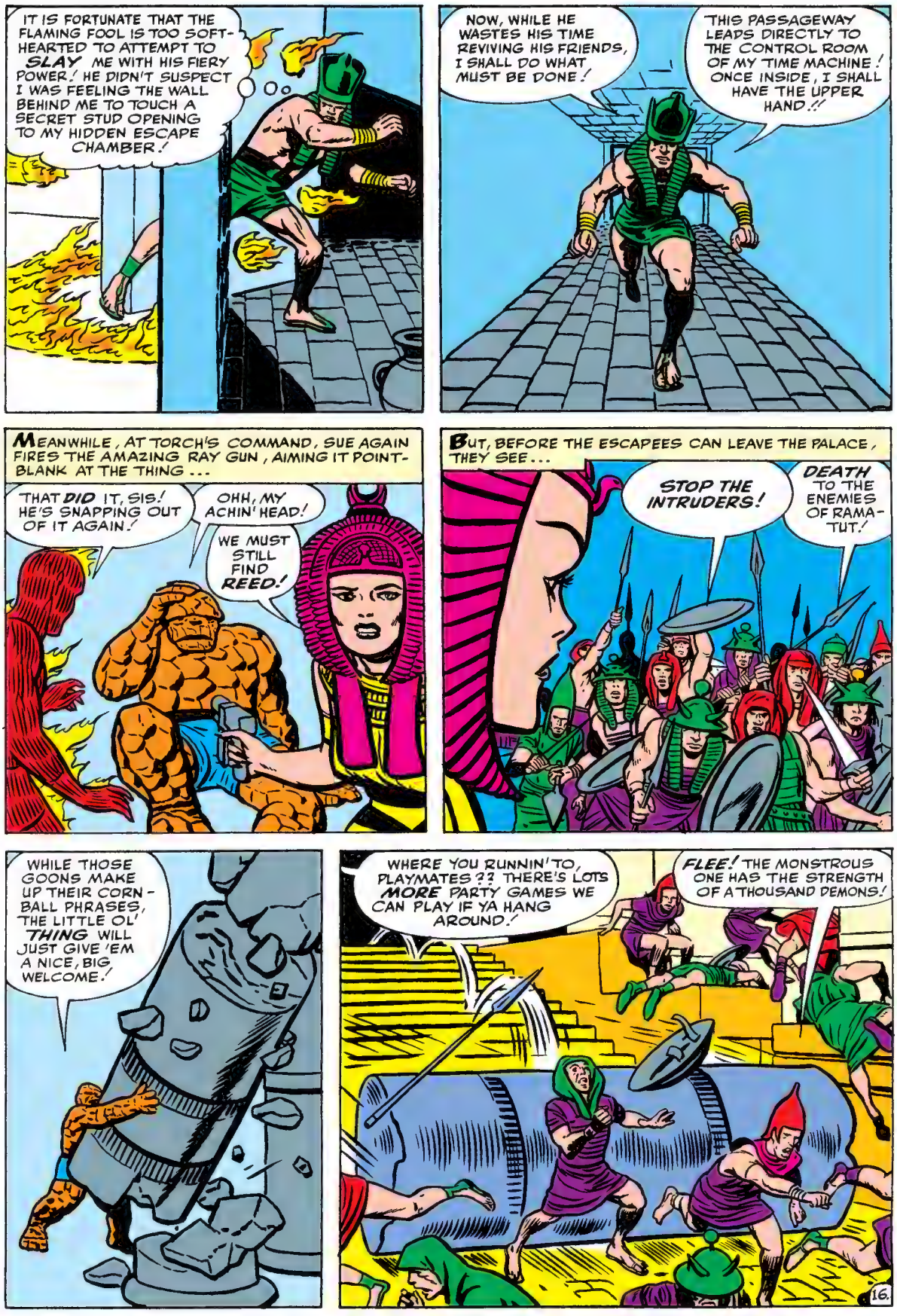

THE RAYS STRUCK HER A SECOND TIME! SHE'S NORMAL AGAIN! MUST GET THE GUN FROM HER!
YOU SAVED ME, BEN! NOW I HAVE THE GUN! IT'S UP TO ME... AND I WON'T LET YOU DOWN! I WON'T FAIL THE FANTASTIC FOUR!


GIVE ME THAT RAY GUN, WOMAN! IT WON'T HELP YOU! I'LL SEIZE IT BEFORE YOU CAN LEARN HOW TO OPERATE IT!
I'VE GOT TO STALL FOR TIME! EVEN A FEW SECONDS!

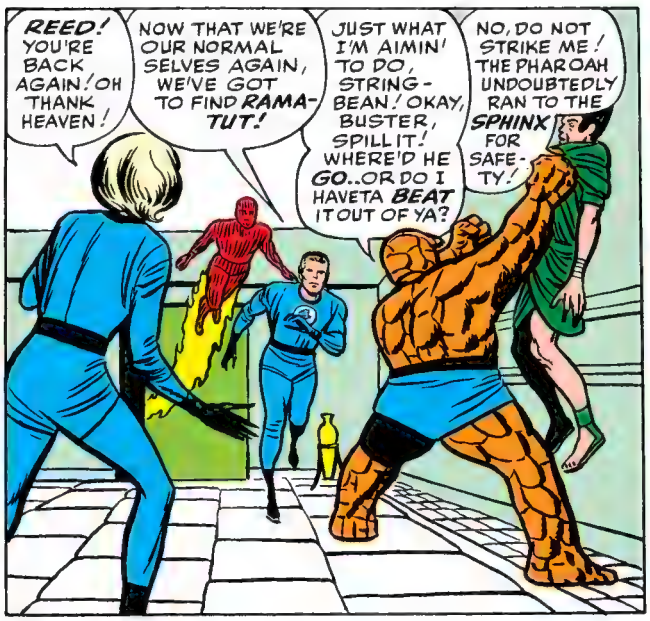

YOU ARE ELUSIVE, MY QUEEN-TO-BE! BUT TURNING INVISIBLE WILL DO NO GOOD! I CAN STILL SEE YOUR GARMENTS!
I FORGOT! I'M NOT WEARING MY UNSTABLE-MOLECULE COSTUME! ONLY ONE CHANCE LEFT.. I'LL FIRE AT THE TORCH!

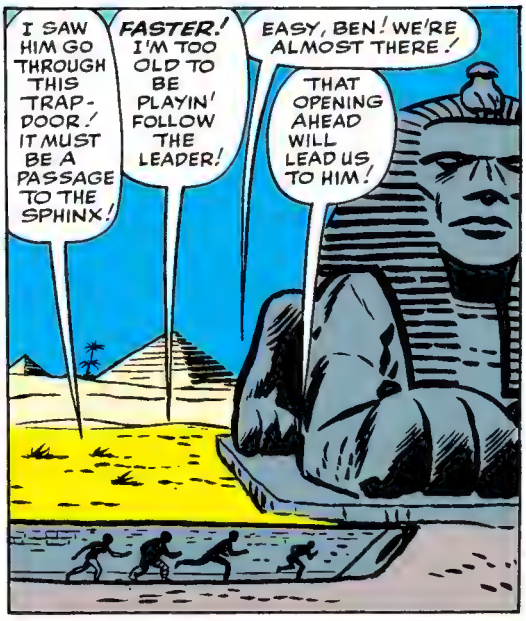

I DID IT! IT WORKED! THE RAY IS BATHING HIM!
YIPPEE! I'M MYSELF AGAIN! I CAN DO WHAT I WANT TO! STAND BACK NOW, SIS, AND WATCH MY STEAM!

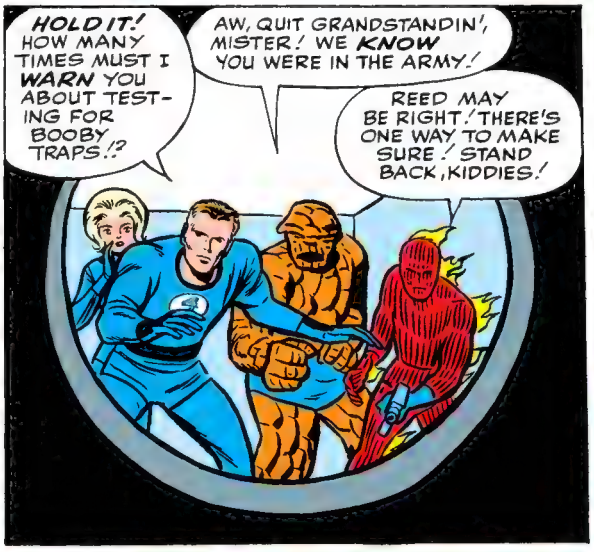

NO! STAY BACK! STOP! I COMMAND YOU!!
MISTER, YOUR COMMANDIN' DAYS ARE OVER! THIS IS JUST A SAMPLE OF WHAT YOU'LL GET WHEN I SNAP THE THING AND MR. FANTASTIC OUT OF THEIR SPELLS, TOO!

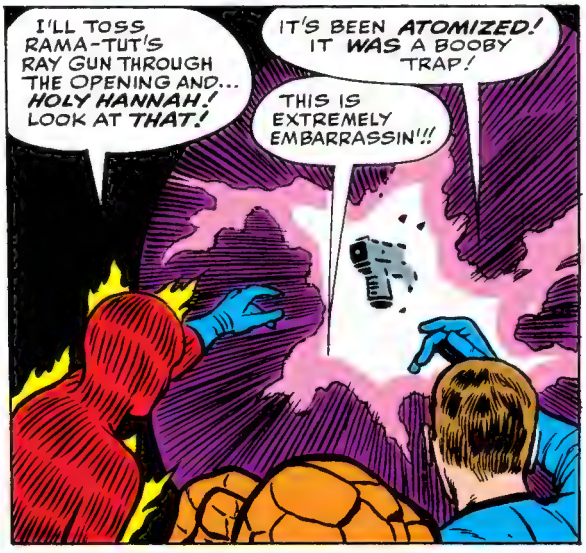

IT IS FORTUNATE THAT THE FLAMING FOOL IS TOO SOFT-HEARTED TO ATTEMPT TO SLAY ME WITH HIS FIERY POWER! HE DIDN'T SUSPECT I WAS FEELING THE WALL BEHIND ME TO TOUCH A SECRET STUD OPENING TO MY HIDDEN ESCAPE CHAMBER!
NOW, WHILE HE WASTES HIS TIME REVIVING HIS FRIENDS, I SHALL DO WHAT MUST BE DONE!
THIS PASSAGEWAY LEADS DIRECTLY TO THE CONTROL ROOM OF MY TIME MACHINE! ONCE INSIDE, I SHALL HAVE THE UPPER HAND!!
MEANWHILE, AT TORCH'S COMMAND, SUE AGAIN FIRES THE AMAZING RAY GUN, AIMING IT POINT-BLANK AT THE THING ...
THAT DID IT, SIS! HE'S SNAPPING OUT OF IT AGAIN!
OHH, MY ACHIN' HEAD!
WE MUST STILL FIND REED!
BUT, BEFORE THE ESCAPEES CAN LEAVE THE PALACE, THEY SEE ...
STOP THE INTRUDERS!
DEATH TO THE ENEMIES OF RAMA-TUT!
WHILE THOSE GOONS MAKE UP THEIR CORN-BALL PHRASES, THE LITTLE OL' THING WILL JUST GIVE 'EM A NICE, BIG WELCOME!
WHERE YOU RUNNIN' TO, PLAYMATES?? THERE'S LOTS MORE PARTY GAMES WE CAN PLAY IF YA HANG AROUND!
FLEE! THE MONSTROUS ONE HAS THE STRENGTH OF A THOUSAND DEMONS!

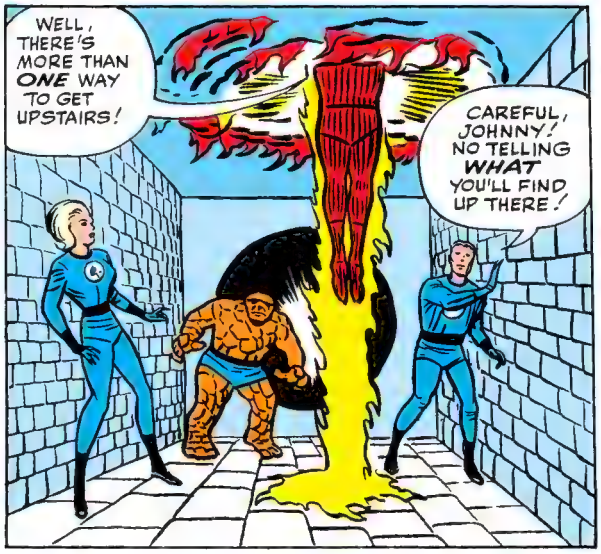
BOY, IT SURE FEELS GOOD TO GET BACK INTO ACTION AGAIN! BUT NO ONE ELSE WANTS TO PLAY!
THIS IS NO TIME FOR SARCASM, BEN! WE'VE STILL GOT TO FIND REED AND A WAY OUT OF HERE!
SIT TIGHT, KIDDIES! I'LL FLY AROUND TILL I CATCH SIGHT OF BIG DADDY!
BEHOLD, IN THE SKY! AN OMEN FROM THE GODS!
WE MUST FLEE THIS LAND FOR IT IS TRULY BEWITCHED!
AH, THERE HE IS! BOY, I COULDN'T MISS A SIGHT LIKE THAT!
THEY'VE GOT OUR BOSS MAN ACTING AS A SHIELD FOR THEM WHILE THEY ATTACK ANOTHER ARMY!
WELL, THEY'LL HAVE TO GET THEMSELVES ANOTHER BOY NOW! THIS'LL BRING REED BACK TO NORMAL!
AT LAST! I'M IN CONTROL OF MY BODY AGAIN! I CAN MOVE MY LIMBS AT MY OWN WILL!
THEN, AFTER THE TORCH FILLS HIS PARTNER IN WITH THE FACTS...
I'LL SAVE MY THANKS FOR LATER, LITTLE CHUM! RIGHT NOW, LET'S GET MOVING!
YAY BO! THIS IS JUST LIKE OLD TIMES! OL' RAMA-TUT BETTER HEAD FOR THE HILLS, EH, PARTNER?!!

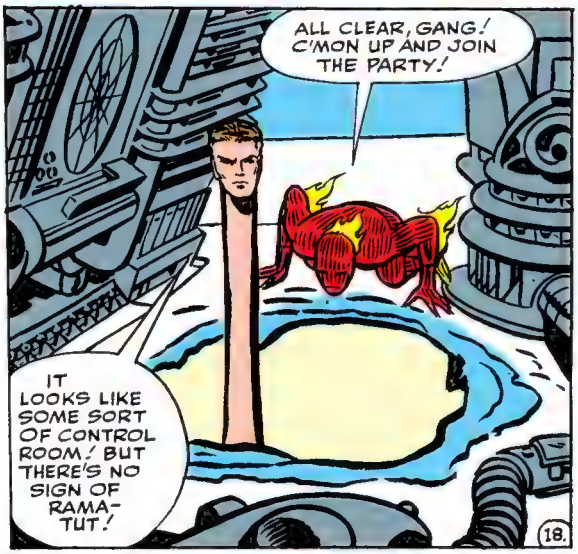

REED! YOU'RE BACK AGAIN! OH THANK HEAVEN!
NOW THAT WE'RE OUR NORMAL SELVES AGAIN, WE'VE GOT TO FIND RAMA-TUT!
JUST WHAT I'M AIMIN' TO DO, STRING-BEAN! OKAY, BUSTER, SPILL IT! WHERE'D HE GO..OR DO I HAVETA BEAT IT OUT OF YA?
NO, DO NOT STRIKE ME! THE PHAROAH UNDOUBTEDLY RAN TO THE SPHINX FOR SAFE-TY!

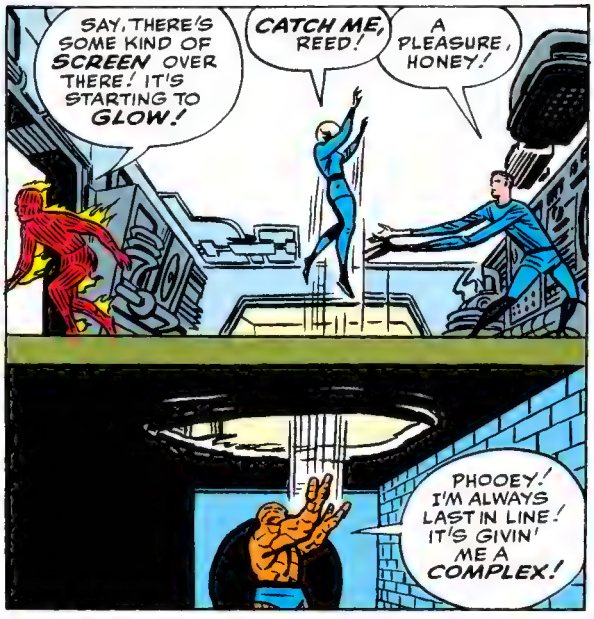

I SAW HIM GO THROUGH THIS TRAP-DOOR! IT MUST BE A PASSAGE TO THE SPHINX!
FASTER! I'M TOO OLD TO BE PLAYIN' FOLLOW THE LEADER!
EASY, BEN! WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
THAT OPENING AHEAD WILL LEAD US TO HIM!

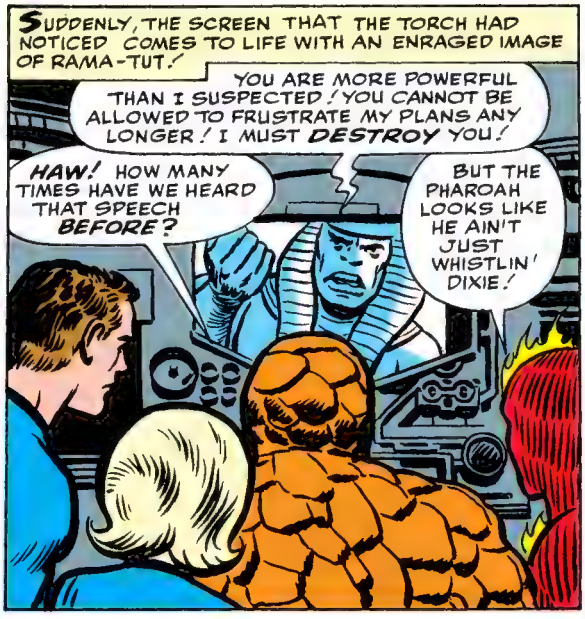

HOLD IT! HOW MANY TIMES MUST I WARN YOU ABOUT TESTING FOR BOOBY TRAPS!?
AW, QUIT GRANDSTANDIN', MISTER! WE KNOW YOU WERE IN THE ARMY!
REED MAY BE RIGHT! THERE'S ONE WAY TO MAKE SURE! STAND BACK, KIDDIES!

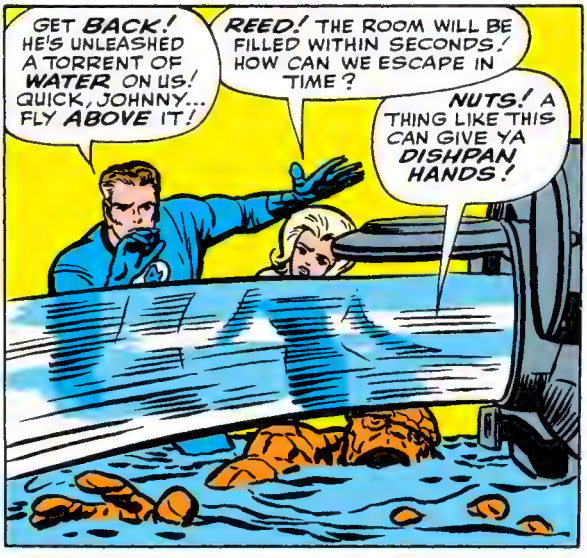

I'LL TOSS RAMA-TUT'S RAY GUN THROUGH THE OPENING AND... HOLY HANNAH! LOOK AT THAT!
IT'S BEEN ATOMIZED! IT WAS A BOOBY TRAP!
THIS IS EXTREMELY EMBARRASSIN'!!!

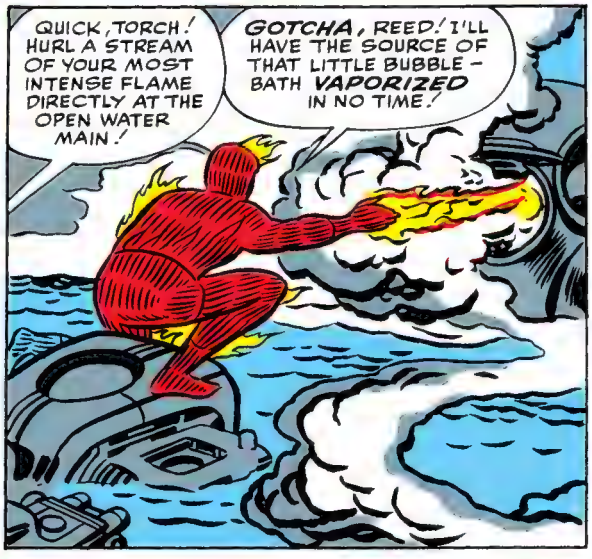

WELL, THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO GET UPSTAIRS!
CAREFUL, JOHNNY! NO TELLING WHAT YOU'LL FIND UP THERE!


ALL CLEAR, GANG! C'MON UP AND JOIN THE PARTY!
IT LOOKS LIKE SOME SORT OF CONTROL ROOM! BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF RAMA-TUT!


SAY, THERE'S SOME KIND OF SCREEN OVER THERE! IT'S STARTING TO GLOW!
CATCH ME, REED!
A PLEASURE, HONEY!
PHOOEY! I'M ALWAYS LAST IN LINE! IT'S GIVIN' ME A COMPLEX!


SUDDENLY, THE SCREEN THAT THE TORCH HAD NOTICED COMES TO LIFE WITH AN ENRAGED IMAGE OF RAMA-TUT!
YOU ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN I SUSPECTED! YOU CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO FRUSTRATE MY PLANS ANY LONGER! I MUST DESTROY YOU!
HAW! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE HEARD THAT SPEECH BEFORE?
BUT THE PHAROAH LOOKS LIKE HE AIN'T JUST WHISTLIN' DIXIE!

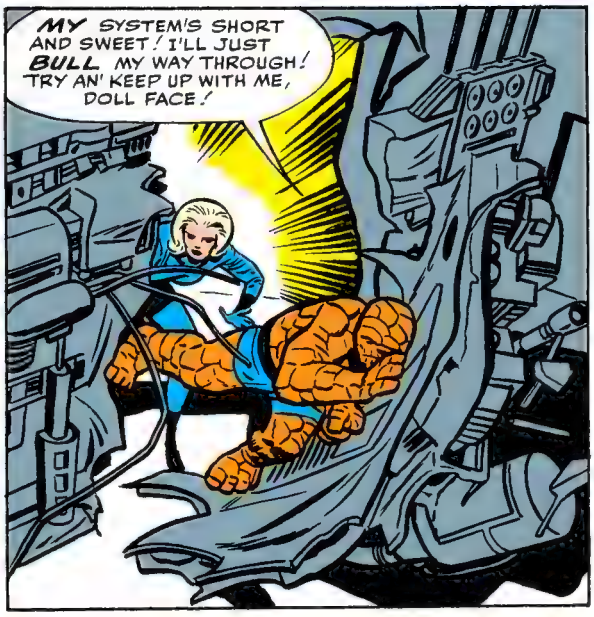

GET BACK! HE'S UNLEASHED A TORRENT OF WATER ON US! QUICK, JOHNNY... FLY ABOVE IT!
REED! THE ROOM WILL BE FILLED WITHIN SECONDS! HOW CAN WE ESCAPE IN TIME?
NUTS! A THING LIKE THIS CAN GIVE YA DISHPAN HANDS!

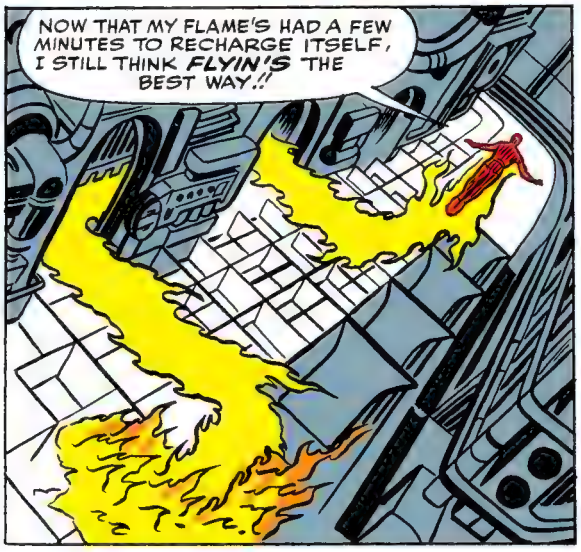

QUICK, TORCH! HURL A STREAM OF YOUR MOST INTENSE FLAME DIRECTLY AT THE OPEN WATER MAIN!
GOTCHA, REED! I'LL HAVE THE SOURCE OF THAT LITTLE BUBBLE-BATH VAPORIZED IN NO TIME!

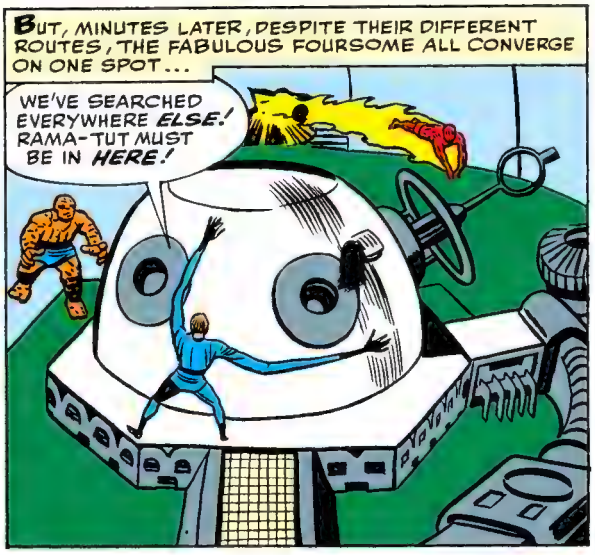
SECONDS LATER...
YOU DID IT, JOHNNY! YOU STOPPED THE ONRUSHING WATER!
SURE! AND LOOK HOW MY LOW-INTENSITY HEAT CAN DRY OUT THE REST OF THE ROOM!
Y'KNOW SOMETHIN'? I'M BEGINNIN' TO THINK THAT NUTTY PHARAOH DOESN'T LIKE US!

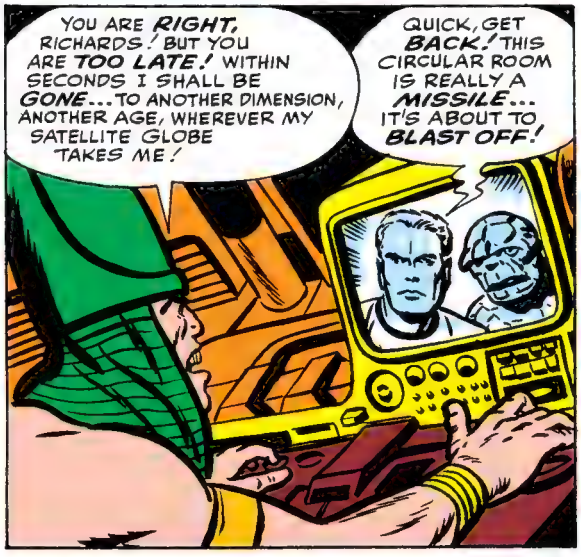
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL TRY NEXT! WE'VE GOT TO FIND HIM AND DEFEAT HIM SOMEHOW!
DON'T MAKE IT SOUND SO HARD, BUDDY BOY! ONE LITTLE LOVE TAP FROM YOURS TRULY WILL BE ALL IT TAKES! LET'S GO!

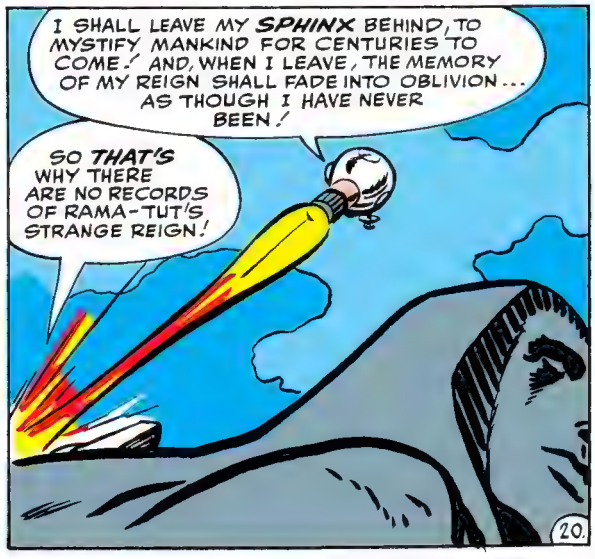
I'LL SEARCH THE CORE OF THE SPHINX, FOLLOWING ALL THE HIDDEN CIRCUITS!

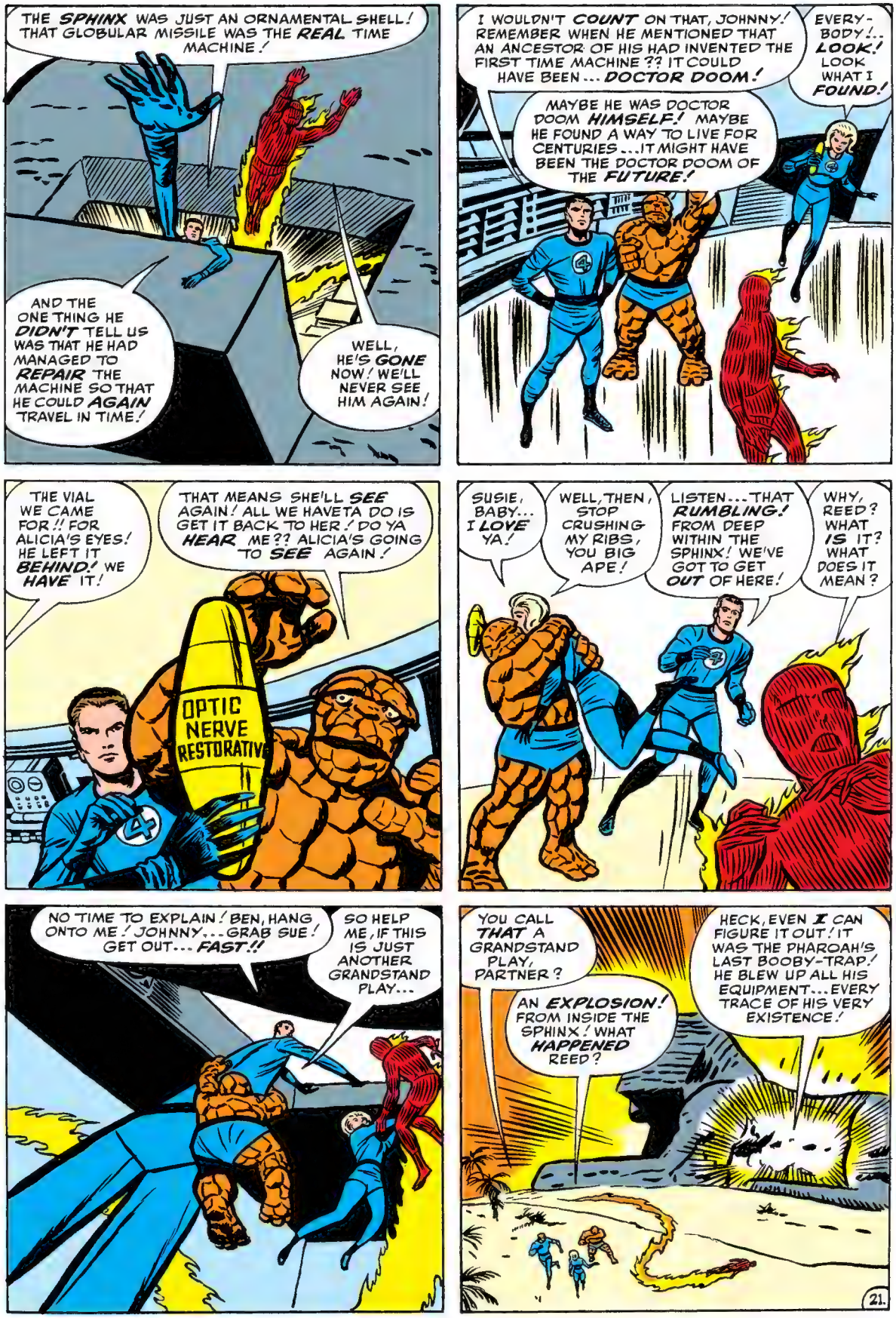

MY SYSTEM'S SHORT AND SWEET! I'LL JUST BULL MY WAY THROUGH! TRY AN' KEEP UP WITH ME, DOLL FACE!

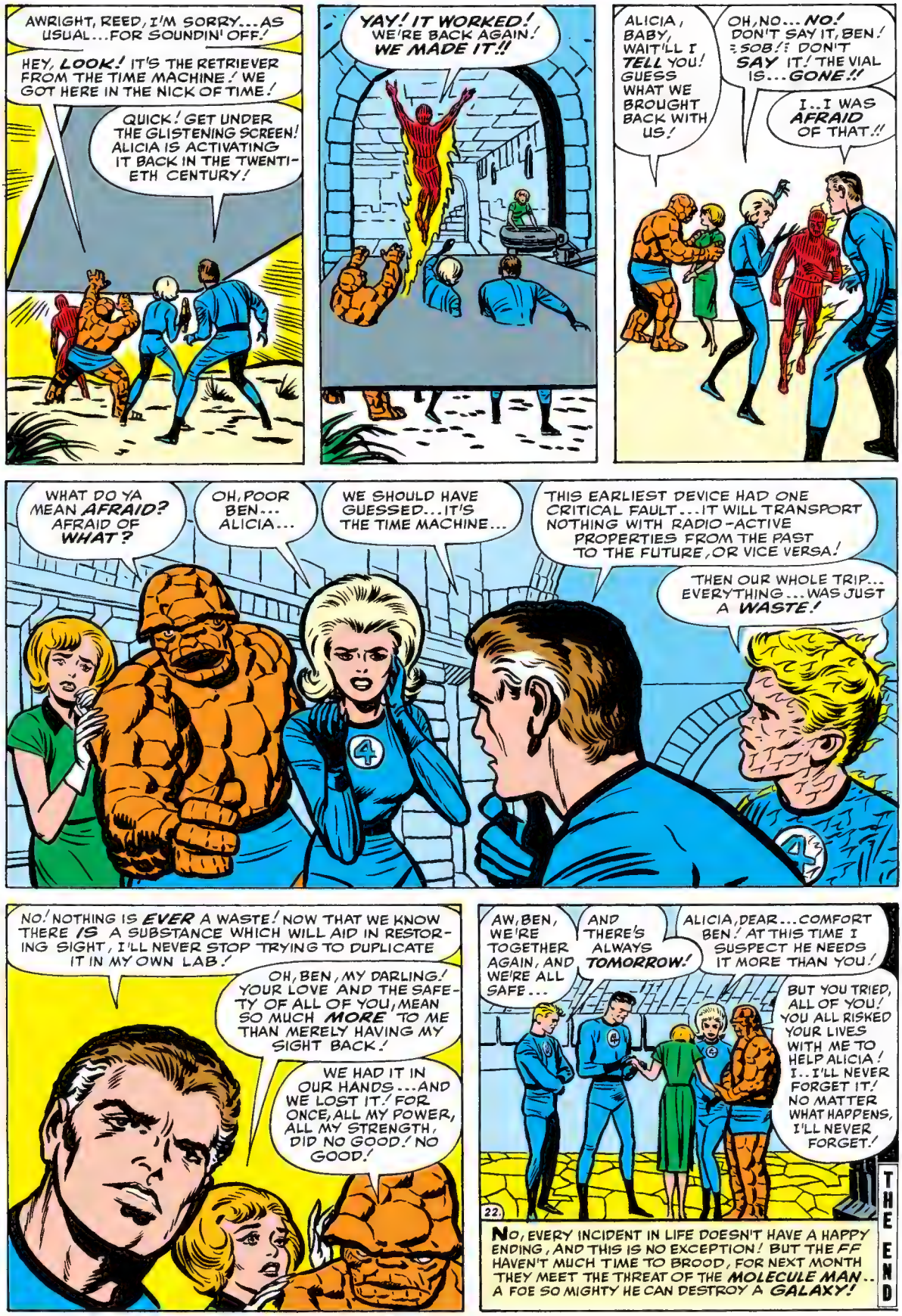

NOW THAT MY FLAME'S HAD A FEW MINUTES TO RECHARGE ITSELF, I STILL THINK FLYIN'S THE BEST WAY!!


BUT, MINUTES LATER, DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENT ROUTES, THE FABULOUS FOURSOME ALL CONVERGE ON ONE SPOT...
WE'VE SEARCHED EVERYWHERE ELSE! RAMA-TUT MUST BE IN HERE!


YOU ARE RIGHT, RICHARDS! BUT YOU ARE TOO LATE! WITHIN SECONDS I SHALL BE GONE...TO ANOTHER DIMENSION, ANOTHER AGE, WHEREVER MY SATELLITE GLOBE TAKES ME!
QUICK, GET BACK! THIS CIRCULAR ROOM IS REALLY A MISSILE... IT'S ABOUT TO BLAST OFF!


I SHALL LEAVE MY SPHINX BEHIND, TO MYSTIFY MANKIND FOR CENTURIES TO COME! AND, WHEN I LEAVE, THE MEMORY OF MY REIGN SHALL FADE INTO OBLIVION... AS THOUGH I HAVE NEVER BEEN!
SO THAT'S WHY THERE ARE NO RECORDS OF RAMA-TUT'S STRANGE REIGN!


THE SPHINX WAS JUST AN ORNAMENTAL SHELL! THAT GLOBULAR MISSILE WAS THE REAL TIME MACHINE!
AND THE ONE THING HE DIDN'T TELL US WAS THAT HE HAD MANAGED TO REPAIR THE MACHINE SO THAT HE COULD AGAIN TRAVEL IN TIME!
WELL, HE'S GONE NOW! WE'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN!
I WOULDN'T COUNT ON THAT, JOHNNY! REMEMBER WHEN HE MENTIONED THAT AN ANCESTOR OF HIS HAD INVENTED THE FIRST TIME MACHINE?? IT COULD HAVE BEEN... DOCTOR DOOM!
MAYBE HE WAS DOCTOR DOOM HIMSELF! MAYBE HE FOUND A WAY TO LIVE FOR CENTURIES...IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE DOCTOR DOOM OF THE FUTURE!
EVERY-BODY!.. LOOK! LOOK WHAT I FOUND!
THE VIAL WE CAME FOR!! FOR ALICIA'S EYES! HE LEFT IT BEHIND! WE HAVE IT!
THAT MEANS SHE'LL SEE AGAIN! ALL WE HAVETA DO IS GET IT BACK TO HER! DO YA HEAR ME?? ALICIA'S GOING TO SEE AGAIN!
OPTIC NERVE RESTORATIVE
SUSIE, BABY... I LOVE YA!
WELL, THEN, STOP CRUSHING MY RIBS, YOU BIG APE!
LISTEN...THAT RUMBLING! FROM DEEP WITHIN THE SPHINX! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
WHY, REED? WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! BEN, HANG ONTO ME! JOHNNY...GRAB SUE! GET OUT... FAST!!
SO HELP ME, IF THIS IS JUST ANOTHER GRANDSTAND PLAY...
YOU CALL THAT A GRANDSTAND PLAY, PARTNER?
AN EXPLOSION! FROM INSIDE THE SPHINX! WHAT HAPPENED REED?
HECK, EVEN I CAN FIGURE IT OUT! IT WAS THE PHAROAH'S LAST BOOBY-TRAP! HE BLEW UP ALL HIS EQUIPMENT...EVERY TRACE OF HIS VERY EXISTENCE!
21.


AWRIGHT, REED, I'M SORRY... AS USUAL... FOR SOUNDIN' OFF!
HEY, LOOK! IT'S THE RETRIEVER FROM THE TIME MACHINE! WE GOT HERE IN THE NICK OF TIME!
QUICK! GET UNDER THE GLISTENING SCREEN! ALICIA IS ACTIVATING IT BACK IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY!
YAY! IT WORKED! WE'RE BACK AGAIN! WE MADE IT!!
ALICIA, BABY, WAIT'LL I TELL YOU! GUESS WHAT WE BROUGHT BACK WITH US!
OH, NO... NO! DON'T SAY IT, BEN! SOB! DON'T SAY IT! THE VIAL IS... GONE!!
I..I WAS AFRAID OF THAT!!
WHAT DO YA MEAN AFRAID? AFRAID OF WHAT?
OH, POOR BEN... ALICIA...
WE SHOULD HAVE GUESSED... IT'S THE TIME MACHINE...
THIS EARLIEST DEVICE HAD ONE CRITICAL FAULT... IT WILL TRANSPORT NOTHING WITH RADIO-ACTIVE PROPERTIES FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE, OR VICE VERSA!
THEN OUR WHOLE TRIP... EVERYTHING... WAS JUST A WASTE!
NO! NOTHING IS EVER A WASTE! NOW THAT WE KNOW THERE IS A SUBSTANCE WHICH WILL AID IN RESTORING SIGHT, I'LL NEVER STOP TRYING TO DUPLICATE IT IN MY OWN LAB!
OH, BEN, MY DARLING! YOUR LOVE AND THE SAFETY OF ALL OF YOU, MEAN SO MUCH MORE TO ME THAN MERELY HAVING MY SIGHT BACK!
WE HAD IT IN OUR HANDS... AND WE LOST IT! FOR ONCE, ALL MY POWER, ALL MY STRENGTH, DID NO GOOD! NO GOOD!
AW, BEN, WE'RE TOGETHER AGAIN, AND WE'RE ALL SAFE...
AND THERE'S ALWAYS TOMORROW!
ALICIA, DEAR... COMFORT BEN! AT THIS TIME I SUSPECT HE NEEDS IT MORE THAN YOU!
BUT YOU TRIED, ALL OF YOU! YOU ALL RISKED YOUR LIVES WITH ME TO HELP ALICIA! I..I'LL NEVER FORGET IT! NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I'LL NEVER FORGET!
22
NO, EVERY INCIDENT IN LIFE DOESN'T HAVE A HAPPY ENDING, AND THIS IS NO EXCEPTION! BUT THE FF HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO BROOD, FOR NEXT MONTH THEY MEET THE THREAT OF THE MOLECULE MAN.. A FOE SO MIGHTY HE CAN DESTROY A GALAXY!
THE END

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
IND.
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Fantastic Four
20 NOV.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢
I WARNED THE FOUR OF YOU NOT TO DEFY... "THE MOLECULE MAN!"
BACK, TORCH--BACK!! HE'S FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN WE! HE WANTS US TO ATTACK HIM!
AFTER READING THIS SUPER-SURPRISE-FILLED ISSUE, YOU WILL CLEARLY UNDERSTAND WHY FANS EVERYWHERE ARE CALLING THIS "THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!"
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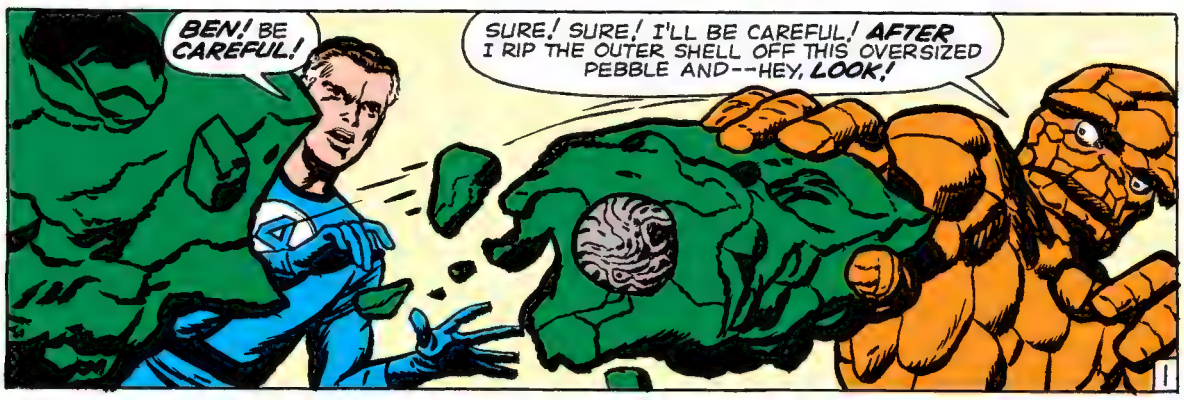
THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR DISCOVER...
"THE MYSTERIOUS MOLECULE MAN!"
WHAT'S GOING ON, SUE?
REED BOUGHT THAT STRANGE METEOR FROM A FARMER WHOSE PROPERTY IT FELL ON! HE WANTS TO STUDY IT!
BEN, EVEN MY MOST SENSITIVE PROBING DEVICES CAN'T PENETRATE THE CORE OF THIS ROCK FROM OUTER SPACE!
PHOOEY! YOU'RE DOIN' IT THE HARD WAY, PAL! STEP ASIDE AND LET OL' BENJAMIN TAKE OVER!
WRITTEN BY: STAN LEE
DRAWN BY: JACK KIRBY
INKED BY: DICK AYERS
LETTERED BY: ART SIMEK
X-419



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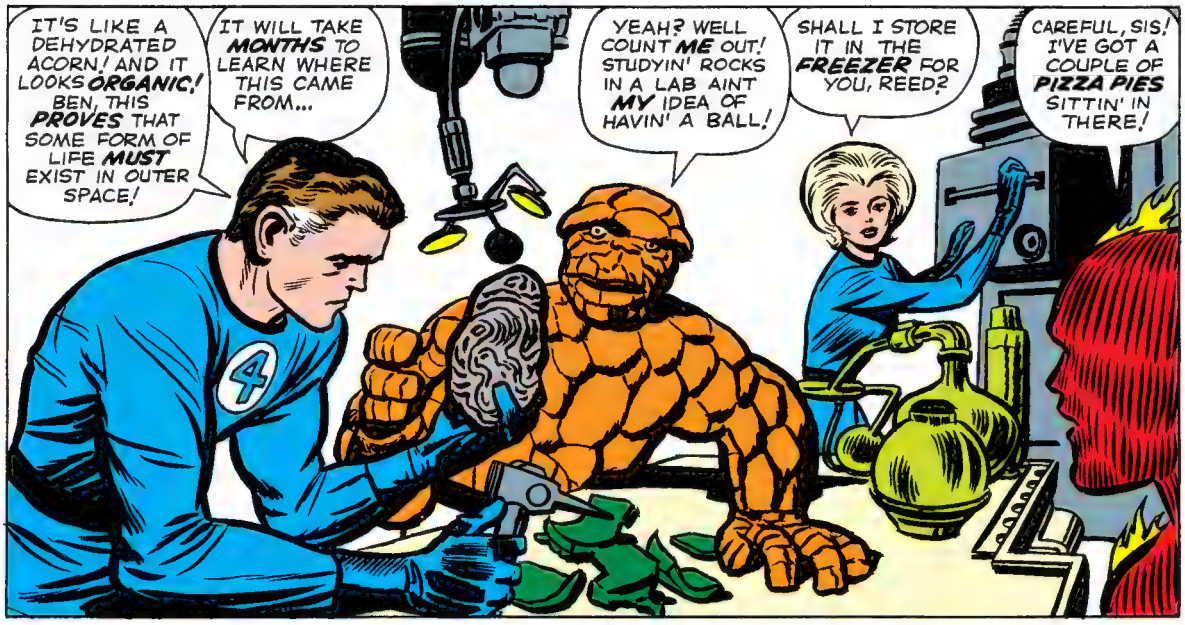
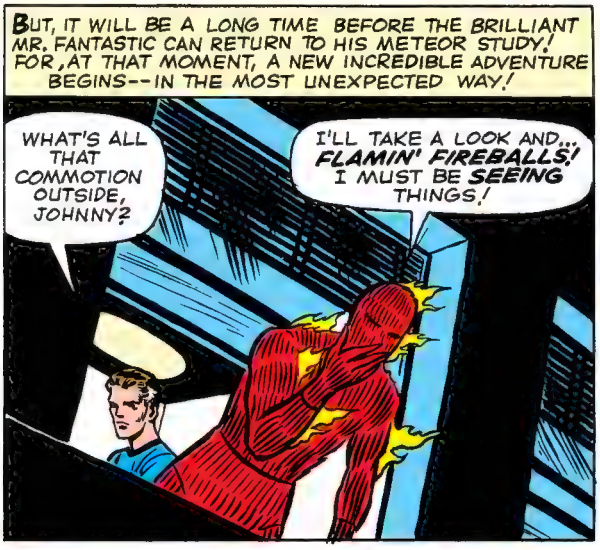
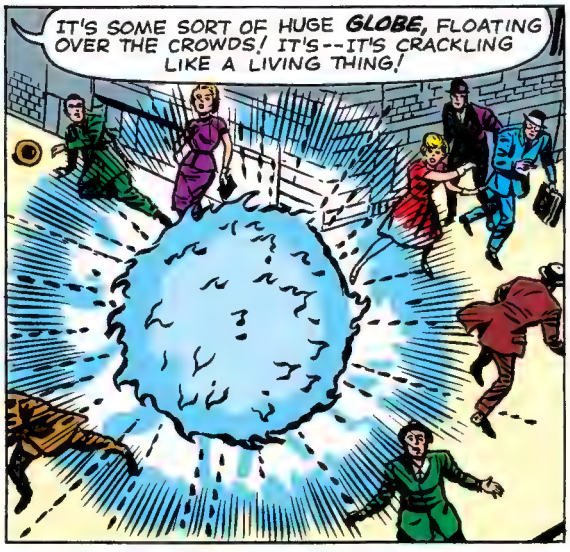
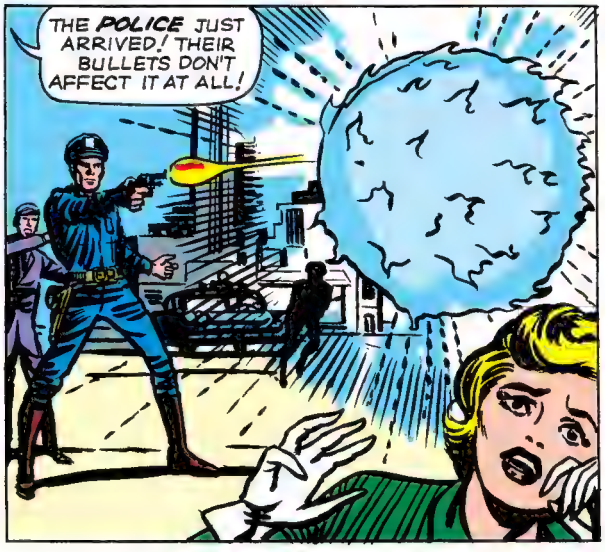
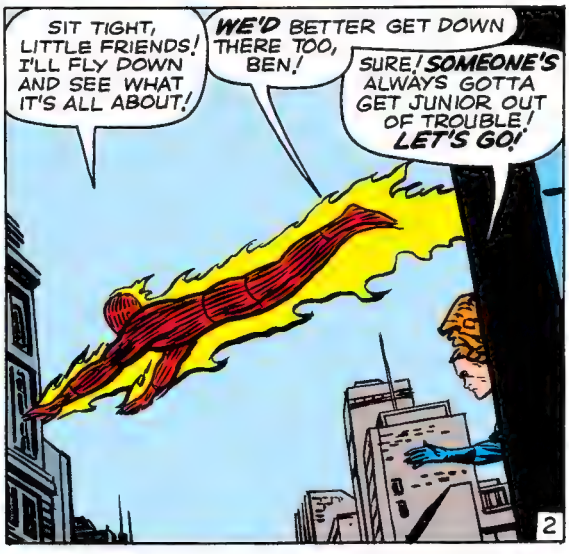

IT'S LIKE A DEHYDRATED ACORN! AND IT LOOKS ORGANIC! BEN, THIS PROVES THAT SOME FORM OF LIFE MUST EXIST IN OUTER SPACE!
IT WILL TAKE MONTHS TO LEARN WHERE THIS CAME FROM...
YEAH? WELL COUNT ME OUT! STUDYIN' ROCKS IN A LAB AINT MY IDEA OF HAVIN' A BALL!
SHALL I STORE IT IN THE FREEZER FOR YOU, REED?
CAREFUL, SIS! I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF PIZZA PIES SITTIN' IN THERE!

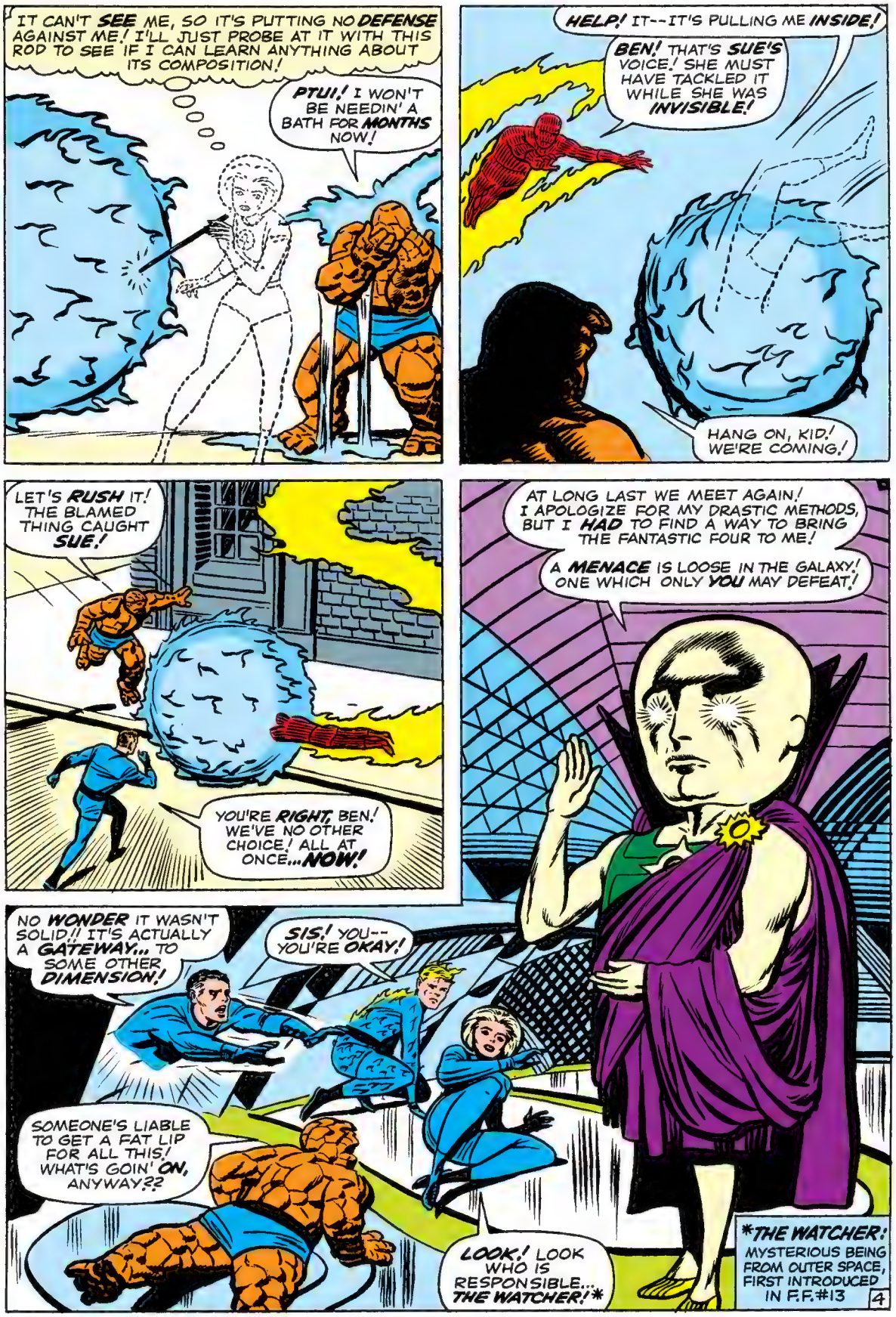

BUT, IT WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE THE BRILLIANT MR. FANTASTIC CAN RETURN TO HIS METEOR STUDY! FOR, AT THAT MOMENT, A NEW INCREDIBLE ADVENTURE BEGINS--IN THE MOST UNEXPECTED WAY!
WHAT'S ALL THAT COMMOTION OUTSIDE, JOHNNY?
I'LL TAKE A LOOK AND... FLAMIN' FIREBALLS! I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!

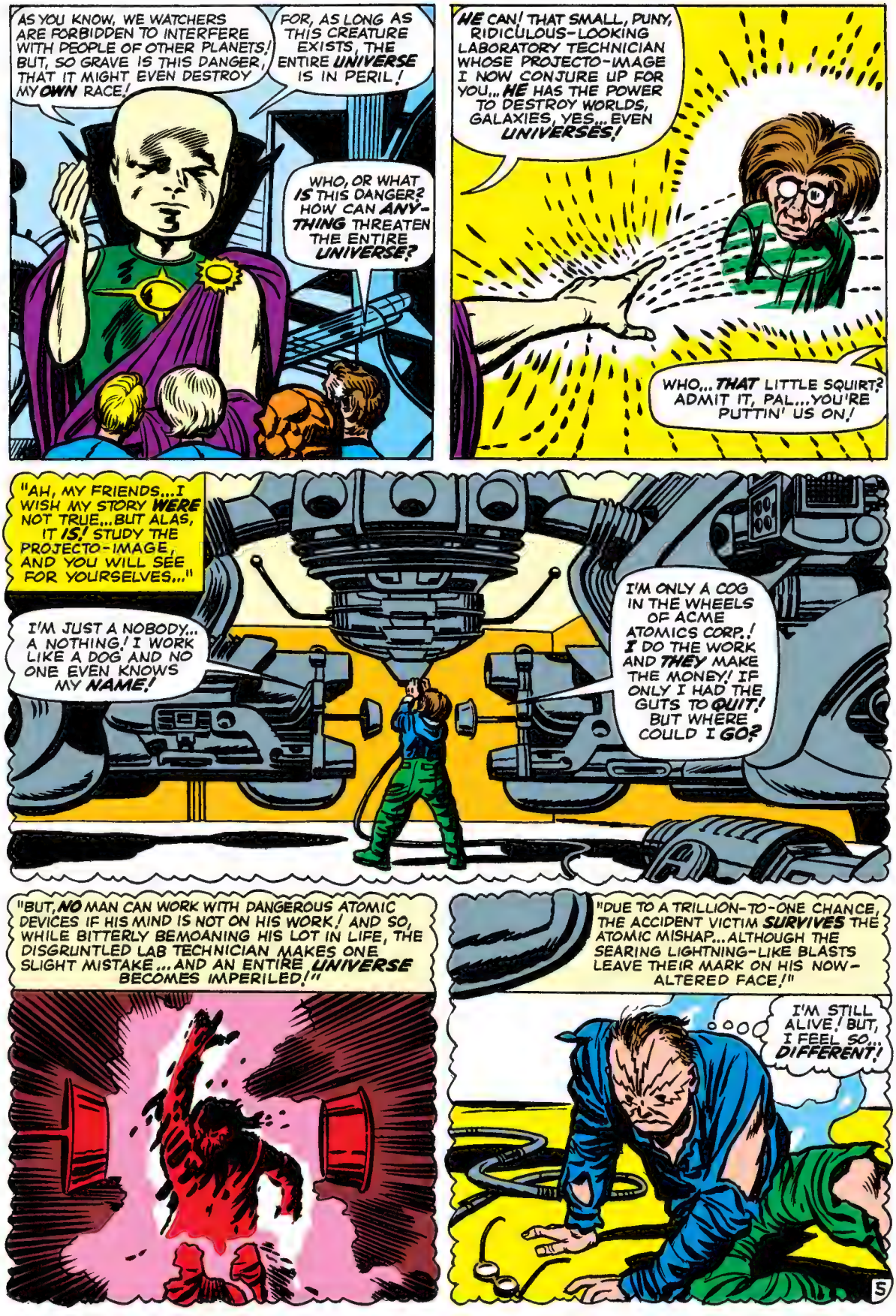

IT'S SOME SORT OF HUGE GLOBE, FLOATING OVER THE CROWDS! IT'S--IT'S CRACKLING LIKE A LIVING THING!

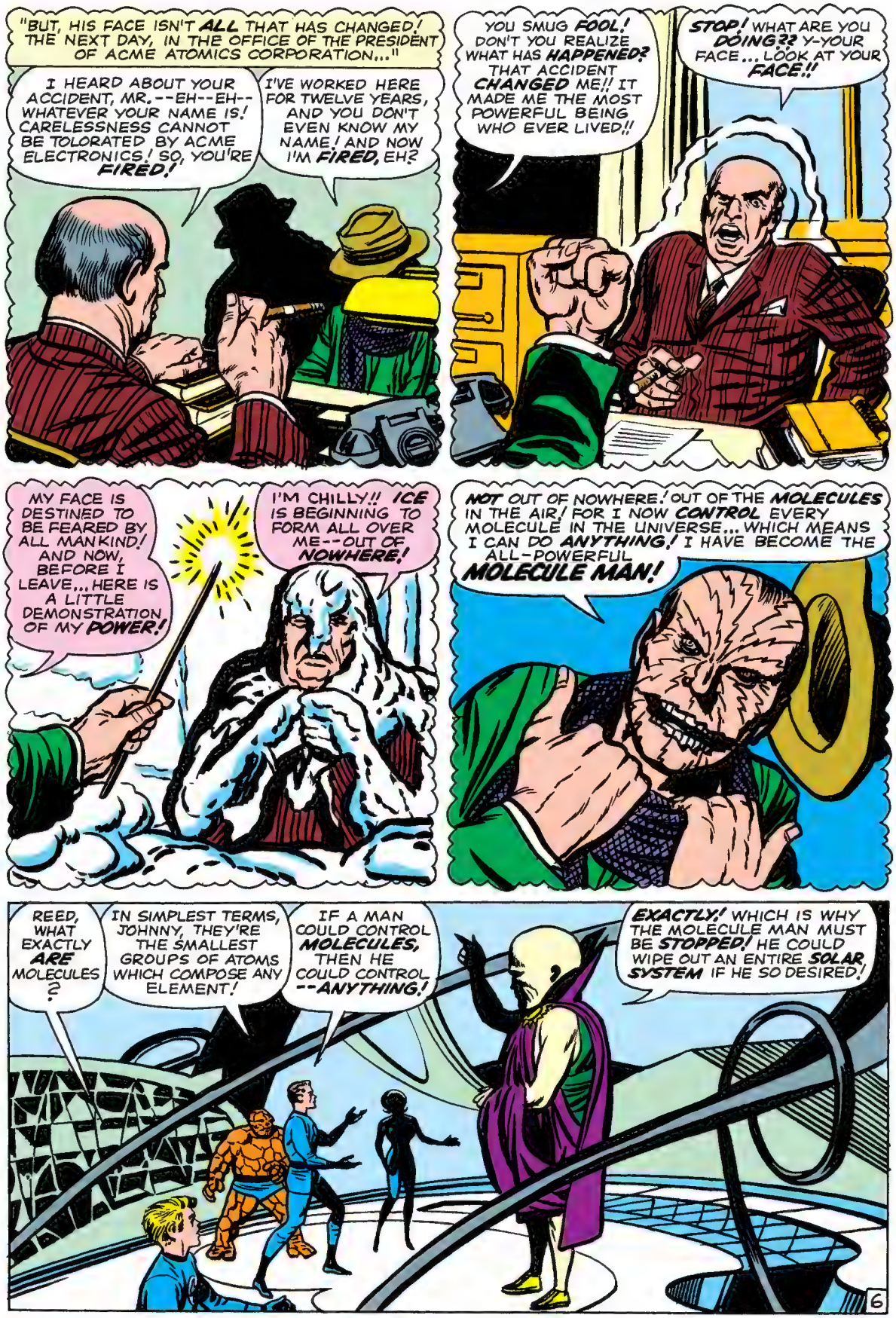

THE POLICE JUST ARRIVED! THEIR BULLETS DON'T AFFECT IT AT ALL!

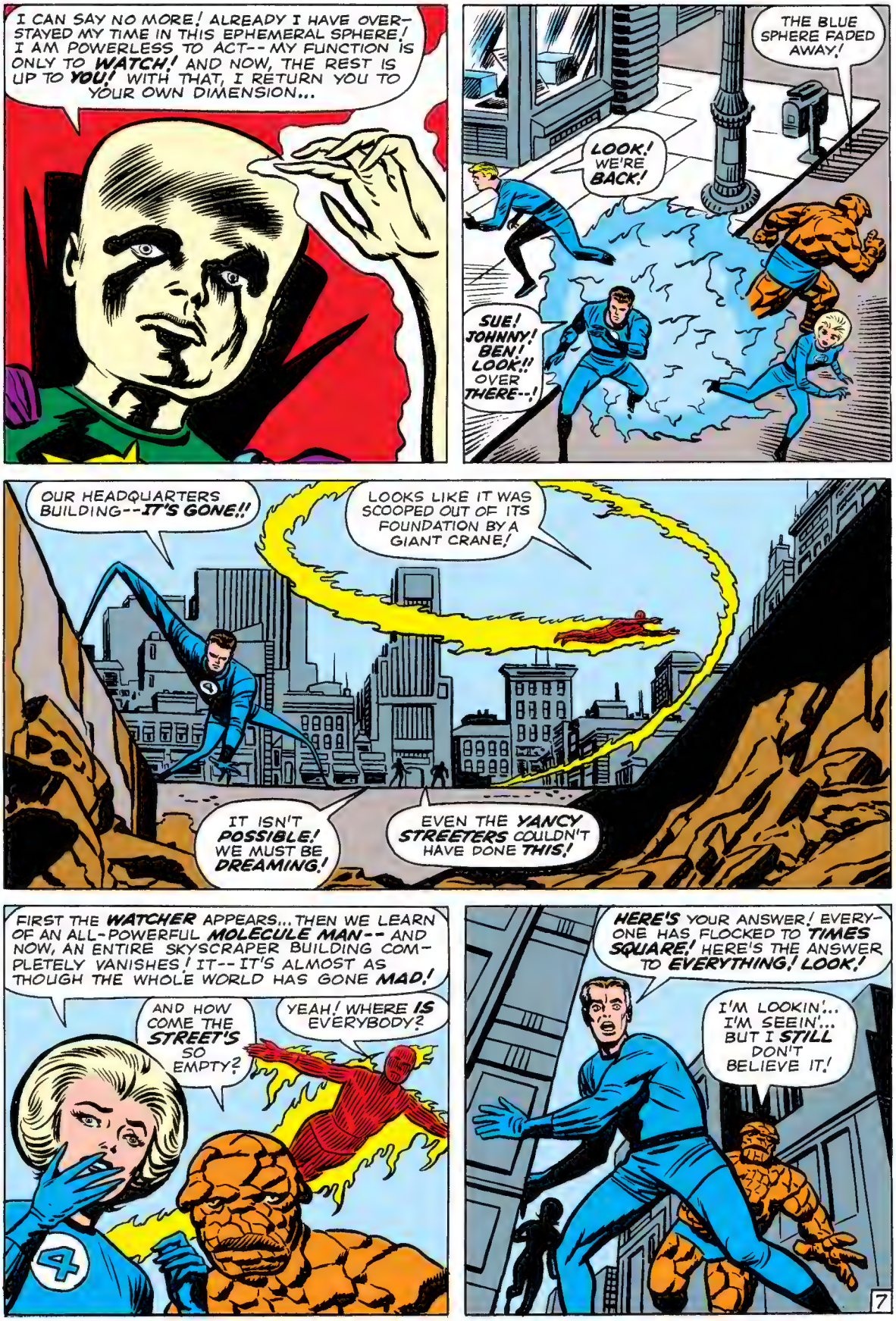

SIT TIGHT, LITTLE FRIENDS! I'LL FLY DOWN AND SEE WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!
WE'D BETTER GET DOWN THERE TOO, BEN!
SURE! SOMEONE'S ALWAYS GOTTA GET JUNIOR OUT OF TROUBLE! LET'S GO!

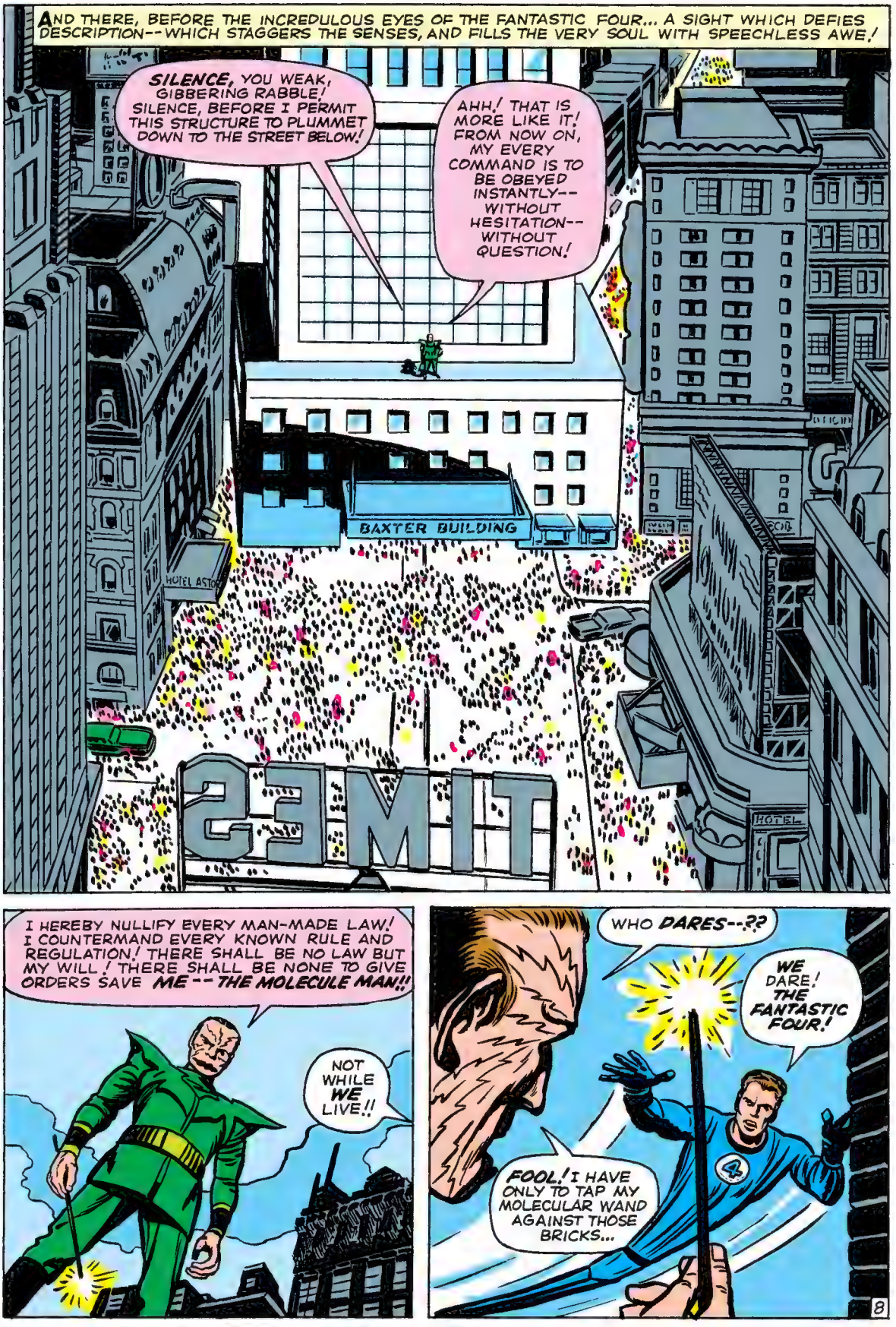
IT--IT'S WHIRLING SO FAST THAT IT'S THROWN ME INTO ORBIT AROUND IT! I--I CAN'T GET ANY CLOSER!
ONE SIDE, TORCH! I'LL MAKE A GIANT BOX OUT OF MYSELF AND TRY TO CONTAIN THE GLOBE WITHIN... LIKE THIS!
IT'S NO GOOD! THE CRACKLING WHATSIS ISN'T EVEN SOLID! IT'S COMING RIGHT THRU YOU... LIKE AN X-RAY BEAM!
NICE TRY, KIDDIES! BUT HERE'S WHERE WE SEPARATE THE MEN FROM THE BOYS!
LET'S SEE WHAT THAT BUTTERBALL CAN DO AGAINST A FEW TONS OF WATER PRESSURE!
BEN, YOUR LITTLE SHOW OF STRENGTH IS VERY DRAMATIC, BUT NOW WE'LL HAVE TO REPAY THE CITY FOR ONE BROKEN WATER-MAIN!
POINT THAT PIPE THE OTHER WAY, YOU BIG APE, BEFORE YOU DROWN YOURSELF!
-GLUPPP-
3

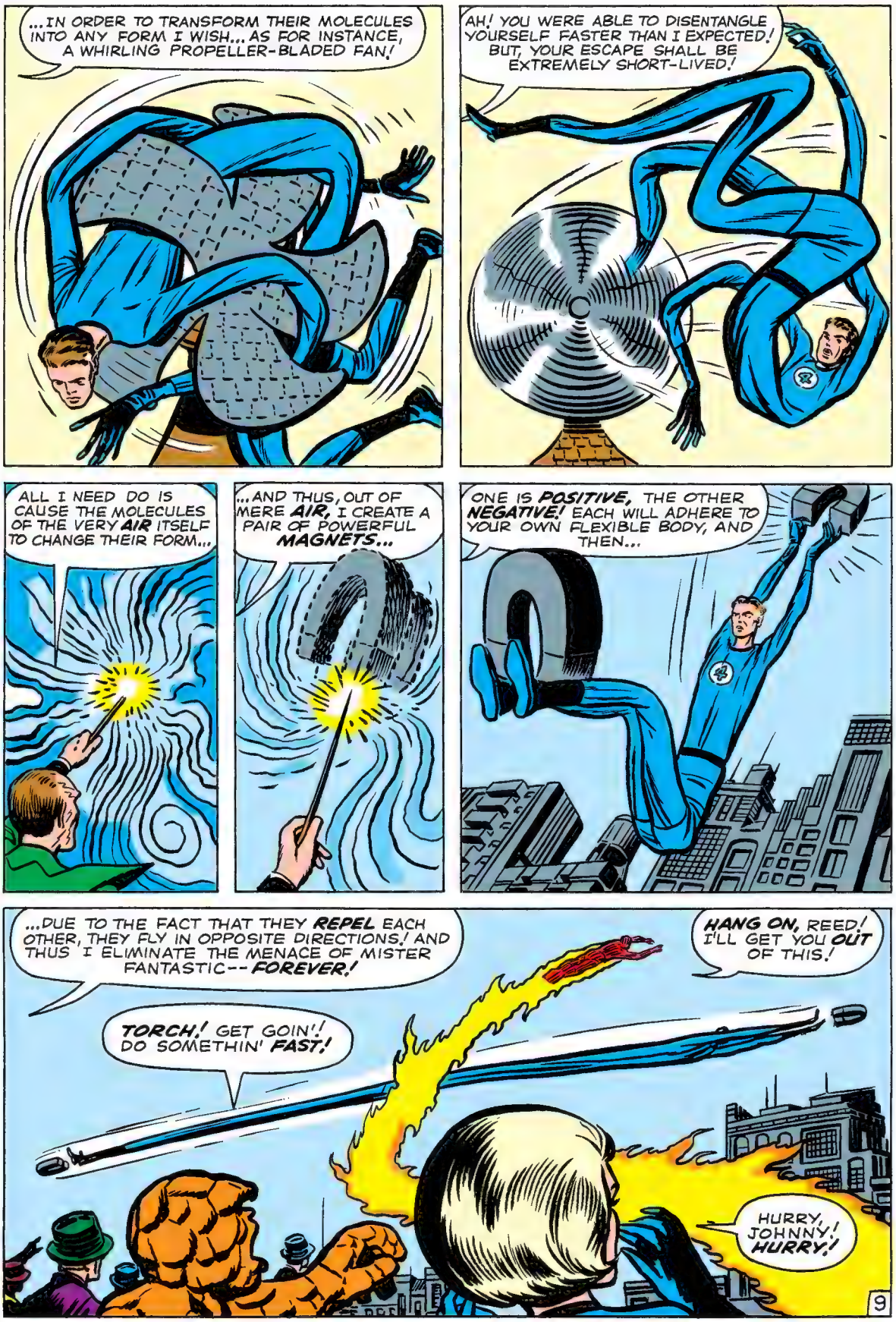

IT CAN'T SEE ME, SO IT'S PUTTING NO DEFENSE AGAINST ME! I'LL JUST PROBE AT IT WITH THIS ROD TO SEE IF I CAN LEARN ANYTHING ABOUT ITS COMPOSITION!
PTUI! I WON'T BE NEEDIN' A BATH FOR MONTHS NOW!
HELP! IT--IT'S PULLING ME INSIDE!
BEN! THAT'S SUE'S VOICE! SHE MUST HAVE TACKLED IT WHILE SHE WAS INVISIBLE!
HANG ON, KID! WE'RE COMING!
LET'S RUSH IT! THE BLAMED THING CAUGHT SUE!
YOU'RE RIGHT, BEN! WE'VE NO OTHER CHOICE! ALL AT ONCE...NOW!
AT LONG LAST WE MEET AGAIN! I APOLOGIZE FOR MY DRASTIC METHODS, BUT I HAD TO FIND A WAY TO BRING THE FANTASTIC FOUR TO ME!
A MENACE IS LOOSE IN THE GALAXY! ONE WHICH ONLY YOU MAY DEFEAT!
NO WONDER IT WASN'T SOLID!! IT'S ACTUALLY A GATEWAY... TO SOME OTHER DIMENSION!
SIS! YOU-- YOU'RE OKAY!
SOMEONE'S LIABLE TO GET A FAT LIP FOR ALL THIS! WHAT'S GOIN' ON, ANYWAY??
LOOK! LOOK WHO IS RESPONSIBLE... THE WATCHER!*
*THE WATCHER! MYSTERIOUS BEING FROM OUTER SPACE, FIRST INTRODUCED IN F.F.#13

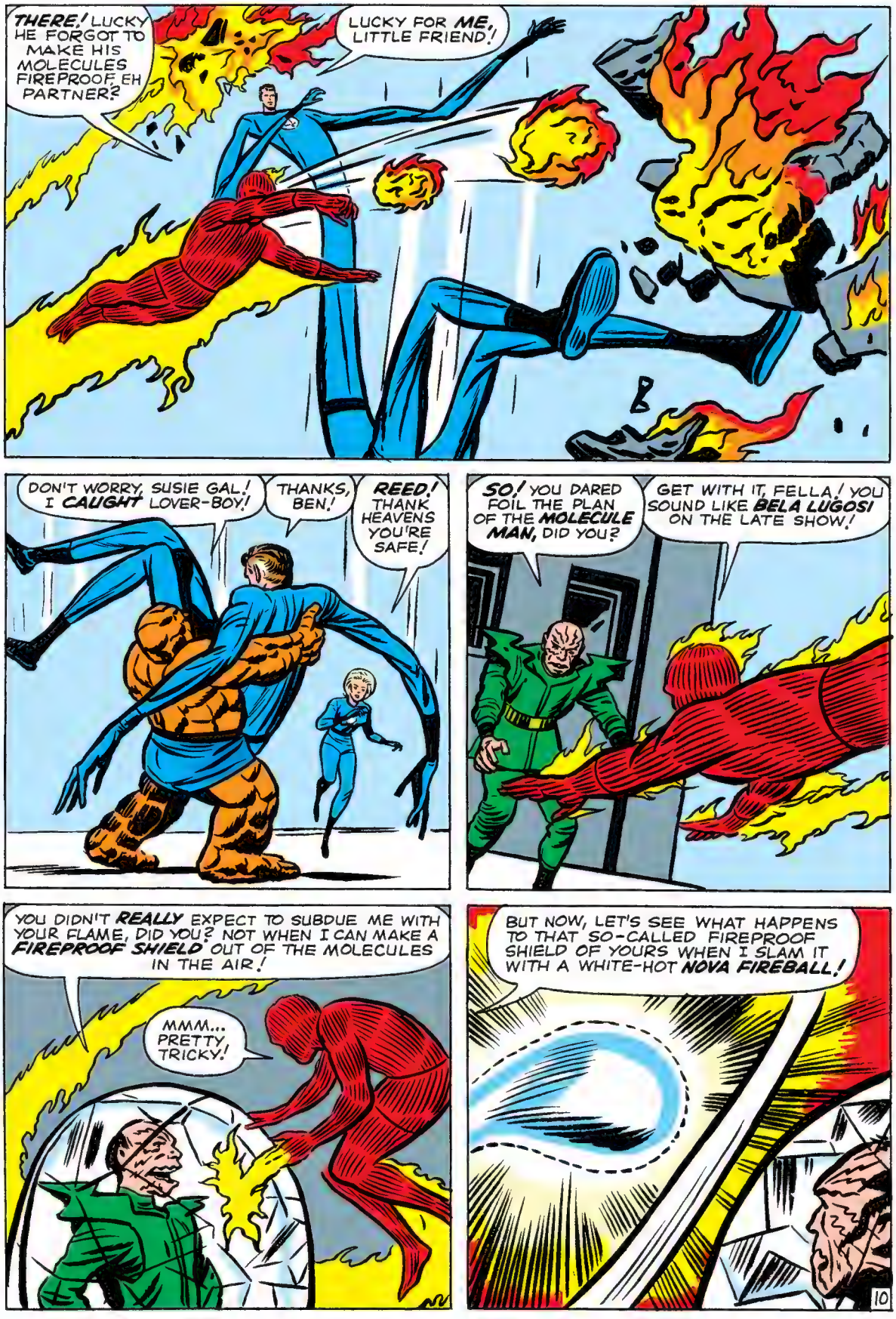

AS YOU KNOW, WE WATCHERS ARE FORBIDDEN TO INTERFERE WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER PLANETS! BUT, SO GRAVE IS THIS DANGER, THAT IT MIGHT EVEN DESTROY MY OWN RACE!
FOR, AS LONG AS THIS CREATURE EXISTS, THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE IS IN PERIL!
WHO, OR WHAT IS THIS DANGER? HOW CAN ANYTHING THREATEN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE?
HE CAN! THAT SMALL, PUNY, RIDICULOUS-LOOKING LABORATORY TECHNICIAN WHOSE PROJECTO-IMAGE I NOW CONJURE UP FOR YOU... HE HAS THE POWER TO DESTROY WORLDS, GALAXIES, YES... EVEN UNIVERSES!
WHO... THAT LITTLE SQUIRT? ADMIT IT, PAL... YOU'RE PUTTIN' US ON!
"AH, MY FRIENDS... I WISH MY STORY WERE NOT TRUE... BUT ALAS, IT IS! STUDY THE PROJECTO-IMAGE, AND YOU WILL SEE FOR YOURSELVES..."
I'M JUST A NOBODY... A NOTHING! I WORK LIKE A DOG AND NO ONE EVEN KNOWS MY NAME!
I'M ONLY A COG IN THE WHEELS OF ACME ATOMICS CORP.! I DO THE WORK AND THEY MAKE THE MONEY! IF ONLY I HAD THE GUTS TO QUIT! BUT WHERE COULD I GO?
"BUT, NO MAN CAN WORK WITH DANGEROUS ATOMIC DEVICES IF HIS MIND IS NOT ON HIS WORK! AND SO, WHILE BITTERLY BEMOANING HIS LOT IN LIFE, THE DISGRUNTLED LAB TECHNICIAN MAKES ONE SLIGHT MISTAKE... AND AN ENTIRE UNIVERSE BECOMES IMPERILED!"
"DUE TO A TRILLION-TO-ONE CHANCE, THE ACCIDENT VICTIM SURVIVES THE ATOMIC MISHAP... ALTHOUGH THE SEARING LIGHTNING-LIKE BLASTS LEAVE THEIR MARK ON HIS NOW-ALTERED FACE!"
I'M STILL ALIVE! BUT, I FEEL SO... DIFFERENT!
5


"BUT, HIS FACE ISN'T ALL THAT HAS CHANGED! THE NEXT DAY, IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF ACME ATOMICS CORPORATION..."
I HEARD ABOUT YOUR ACCIDENT, MR.--EH--EH--WHATEVER YOUR NAME IS! CARELESSNESS CANNOT BE TOLORATED BY ACME ELECTRONICS! SO, YOU'RE FIRED!
I'VE WORKED HERE FOR TWELVE YEARS, AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW MY NAME! AND NOW I'M FIRED, EH?
YOU SMUG FOOL! DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT HAS HAPPENED? THAT ACCIDENT CHANGED ME!! IT MADE ME THE MOST POWERFUL BEING WHO EVER LIVED!!
STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?? Y-YOUR FACE... LOOK AT YOUR FACE!!
MY FACE IS DESTINED TO BE FEARED BY ALL MANKIND! AND NOW, BEFORE I LEAVE... HERE IS A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION OF MY POWER!
I'M CHILLY!! ICE IS BEGINNING TO FORM ALL OVER ME--OUT OF NOWHERE!
NOT OUT OF NOWHERE! OUT OF THE MOLECULES IN THE AIR! FOR I NOW CONTROL EVERY MOLECULE IN THE UNIVERSE... WHICH MEANS I CAN DO ANYTHING! I HAVE BECOME THE ALL-POWERFUL MOLECULE MAN!
REED, WHAT EXACTLY ARE MOLECULES?
IN SIMPLEST TERMS, JOHNNY, THEY'RE THE SMALLEST GROUPS OF ATOMS WHICH COMPOSE ANY ELEMENT!
IF A MAN COULD CONTROL MOLECULES, THEN HE COULD CONTROL --ANYTHING!
EXACTLY! WHICH IS WHY THE MOLECULE MAN MUST BE STOPPED! HE COULD WIPE OUT AN ENTIRE SOLAR SYSTEM IF HE SO DESIRED!
6


I CAN SAY NO MORE! ALREADY I HAVE OVERSTAYED MY TIME IN THIS EPHEMERAL SPHERE! I AM POWERLESS TO ACT-- MY FUNCTION IS ONLY TO WATCH! AND NOW, THE REST IS UP TO YOU! WITH THAT, I RETURN YOU TO YOUR OWN DIMENSION...
THE BLUE SPHERE FADED AWAY!
LOOK! WE'RE BACK!
SUE! JOHNNY! BEN! LOOK!! OVER THERE--!
OUR HEADQUARTERS BUILDING--IT'S GONE!!
LOOKS LIKE IT WAS SCOOPED OUT OF ITS FOUNDATION BY A GIANT CRANE!
IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! WE MUST BE DREAMING!
EVEN THE YANCY STREETERS COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS!
FIRST THE WATCHER APPEARS... THEN WE LEARN OF AN ALL-POWERFUL MOLECULE MAN-- AND NOW, AN ENTIRE SKYSCRAPER BUILDING COMPLETELY VANISHES! IT-- IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH THE WHOLE WORLD HAS GONE MAD!
AND HOW COME THE STREET'S SO EMPTY?
YEAH! WHERE IS EVERYBODY?
HERE'S YOUR ANSWER! EVERYONE HAS FLOCKED TO TIMES SQUARE! HERE'S THE ANSWER TO EVERYTHING! LOOK!
I'M LOOKIN'... I'M SEEIN'... BUT I STILL DON'T BELIEVE IT!

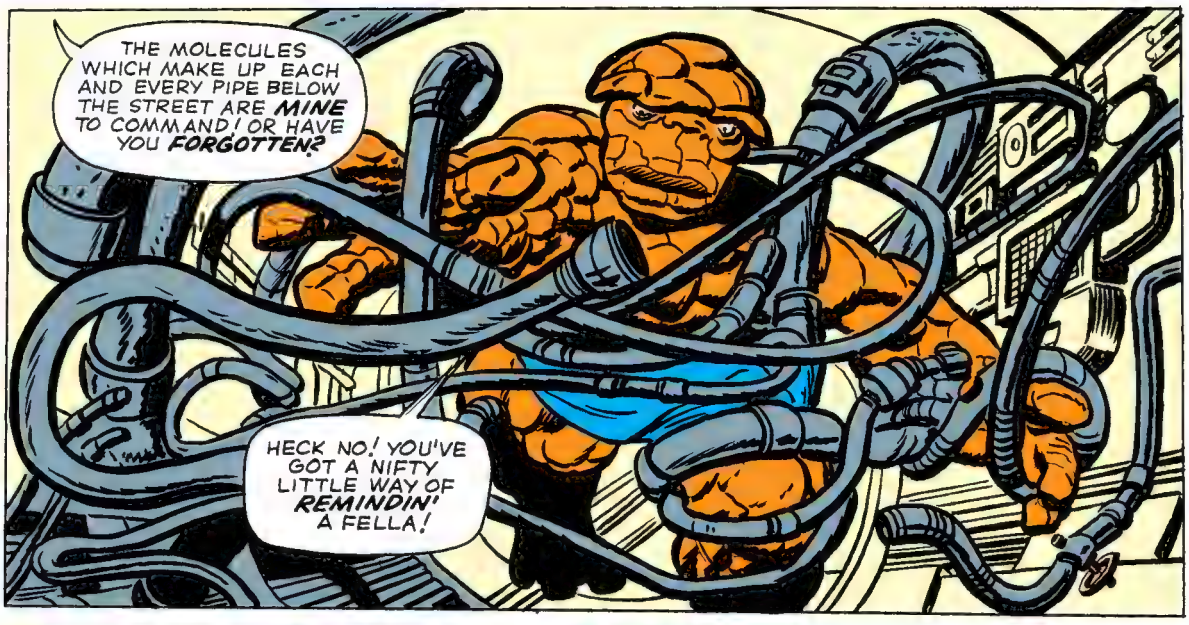

AND THERE, BEFORE THE INCREDULOUS EYES OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR... A SIGHT WHICH DEFIES DESCRIPTION--WHICH STAGGERS THE SENSES, AND FILLS THE VERY SOUL WITH SPEECHLESS AWE!
SILENCE, YOU WEAK, GIBBERING RABBLE! SILENCE, BEFORE I PERMIT THIS STRUCTURE TO PLUMMET DOWN TO THE STREET BELOW!
AHH! THAT IS MORE LIKE IT! FROM NOW ON, MY EVERY COMMAND IS TO BE OBEYED INSTANTLY--WITHOUT HESITATION--WITHOUT QUESTION!
BAXTER BUILDING
HOTEL ASTOR
I HEREBY NULLIFY EVERY MAN-MADE LAW! I COUNTERMAND EVERY KNOWN RULE AND REGULATION! THERE SHALL BE NO LAW BUT MY WILL! THERE SHALL BE NONE TO GIVE ORDERS SAVE ME -- THE MOLECULE MAN!!
NOT WHILE WE LIVE!!
WHO DARES--??
WE DARE! THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
FOOL! I HAVE ONLY TO TAP MY MOLECULAR WAND AGAINST THOSE BRICKS...
8

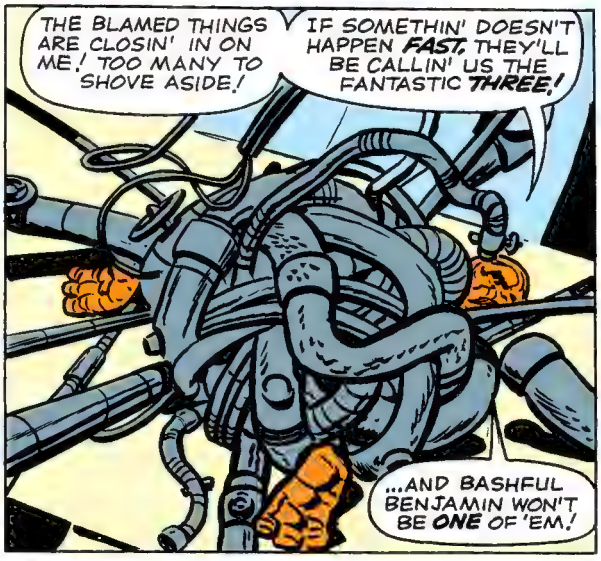

...IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM THEIR MOLECULES INTO ANY FORM I WISH... AS FOR INSTANCE, A WHIRLING PROPELLER-BLADED FAN!
AH! YOU WERE ABLE TO DISENTANGLE YOURSELF FASTER THAN I EXPECTED! BUT, YOUR ESCAPE SHALL BE EXTREMELY SHORT-LIVED!
ALL I NEED DO IS CAUSE THE MOLECULES OF THE VERY AIR ITSELF TO CHANGE THEIR FORM...
...AND THUS, OUT OF MERE AIR, I CREATE A PAIR OF POWERFUL MAGNETS...
ONE IS POSITIVE, THE OTHER NEGATIVE! EACH WILL ADHERE TO YOUR OWN FLEXIBLE BODY, AND THEN...
...DUE TO THE FACT THAT THEY REPEL EACH OTHER, THEY FLY IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS! AND THUS I ELIMINATE THE MENACE OF MISTER FANTASTIC--FOREVER!
HANG ON, REED! I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THIS!
TORCH! GET GOIN'! DO SOMETHIN' FAST!
HURRY, JOHNNY! HURRY!
9

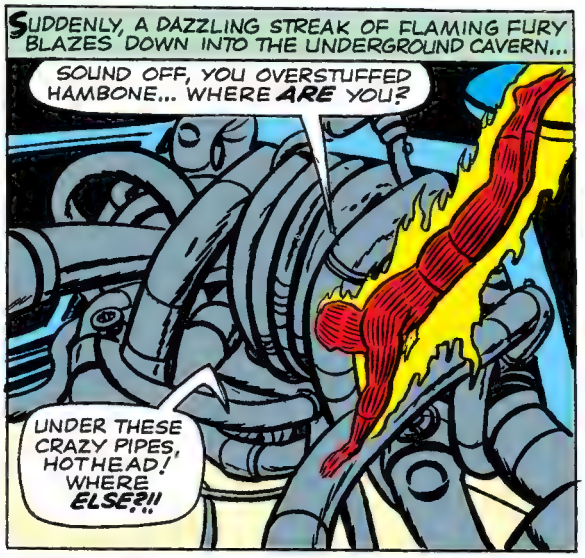

THERE! LUCKY HE FORGOT TO MAKE HIS MOLECULES FIREPROOF, EH PARTNER?
LUCKY FOR ME, LITTLE FRIEND!
DON'T WORRY, SUSIE GAL! I CAUGHT LOVER-BOY!
THANKS, BEN!
REED! THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE SAFE!
SO! YOU DARED FOIL THE PLAN OF THE MOLECULE MAN, DID YOU?
GET WITH IT, FELLA! YOU SOUND LIKE BELA LUGOSI ON THE LATE SHOW!
YOU DIDN'T REALLY EXPECT TO SUBDUE ME WITH YOUR FLAME, DID YOU? NOT WHEN I CAN MAKE A FIREPROOF SHIELD OUT OF THE MOLECULES IN THE AIR!
MMM... PRETTY TRICKY!
BUT NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO THAT SO-CALLED FIREPROOF SHIELD OF YOURS WHEN I SLAM IT WITH A WHITE-HOT NOVA FIREBALL!

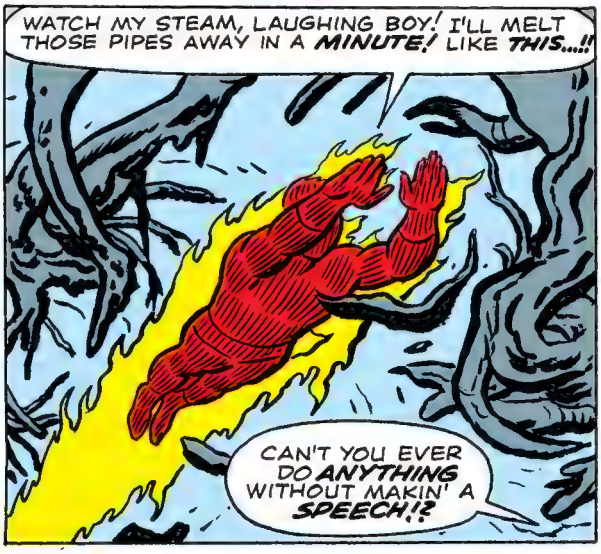
ALL I NEED DO IS CREATE A SIMPLE SPRING UNDER MY SHIELD, AND BOUNCE OUT OF HARM'S WAY!
BUT ENOUGH OF THESE CHILDISH PRANKS!
BY TURNING MY SHIELD INTO A PARACHUTE, I CAN GLIDE SMOOTHLY DOWN TO MY CAPTIVE CITY AGAIN!
I WAS HOPIN' HE'D COME BACK TO EARTH!
GANGWAY, PEOPLE! I'M GONNA DEMOLISH THAT GRINNIN' APE!
THAT PHONY, TWO-BIT WAND OF YOURS WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD AGAINST ME, BUSTER!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! BY INSTANTLY REARRANGING THE MOLECULES IN THE ROADWAY, I'LL CREATE A LITTLE OBSTACLE FOR YOU!
ROLL DOWN EASY, BEN! HE CAN MAKE THAT ROADWAY SO HIGH YOU'LL NEVER GET OVER IT!
LOOK OUT BELOW!
HA! THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE AS HELPLESS AS ANYBODY ELSE AGAINST THE MOLECULE MAN!

COVER ME, BEN! I'M GOING TO STRETCH OVER THIS MOUNTAIN OF CEMENT AND... BEN, COME BACK! WAIT!
WAIT, MY EYE! NOBODY MAKES A SAP OUTTA ME!
DIDN'T EXPECT ME SO SOON, DID YA?
STILL DEPENDING ON YOUR BRUTE STRENGTH ALONE, EH? WELL, BY USING THE ELECTRIC MOLECULES FROM THAT SIGN, I'LL FINISH YOU FOR GOOD!
THERE! EVEN YOUR BRUTISH STRENGTH CANNOT RESIST THE STAGGERING POWER OF ELECTRICITY! NOT WHEN EVERY MOLECULE IS DIRECTED AGAINST YOUR UNGAINLY FORM!
YEOWWCH!
SEEKING SHELTER IN THAT MANHOLE WILL DO YOU NO GOOD!
WELL, WELL! LOOK WHO'S WORRIED ABOUT MY WELFARE ALL OF A SUDDEN!
YOU WERE A FOOL TO TAKE COVER DOWN THERE! NOW YOU HAVE REALLY TRAPPED YOURSELF! JUST WATCH...
12

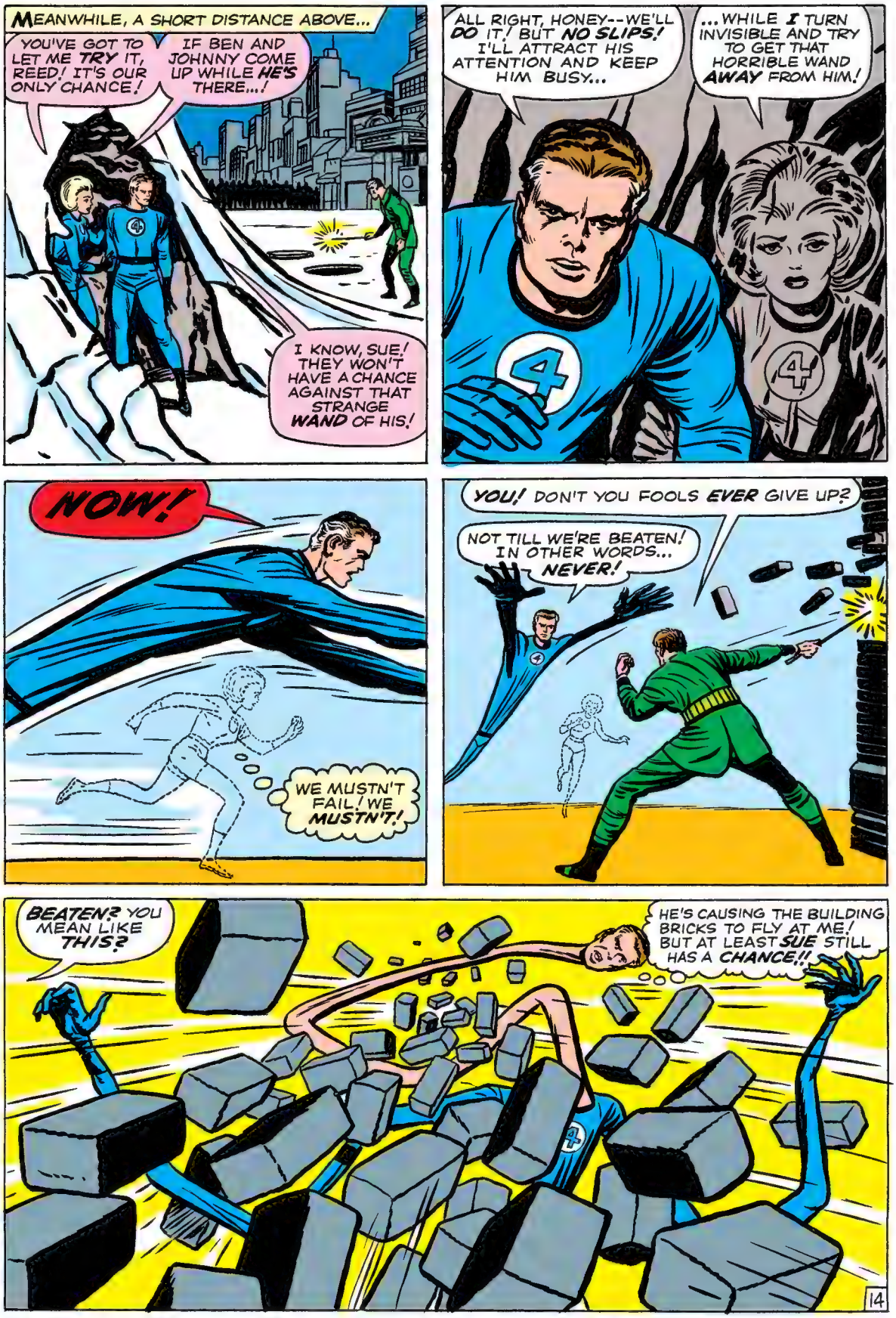

THE MOLECULES WHICH MAKE UP EACH AND EVERY PIPE BELOW THE STREET ARE MINE TO COMMAND! OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?
HECK NO! YOU'VE GOT A NIFTY LITTLE WAY OF REMINDIN' A FELLA!

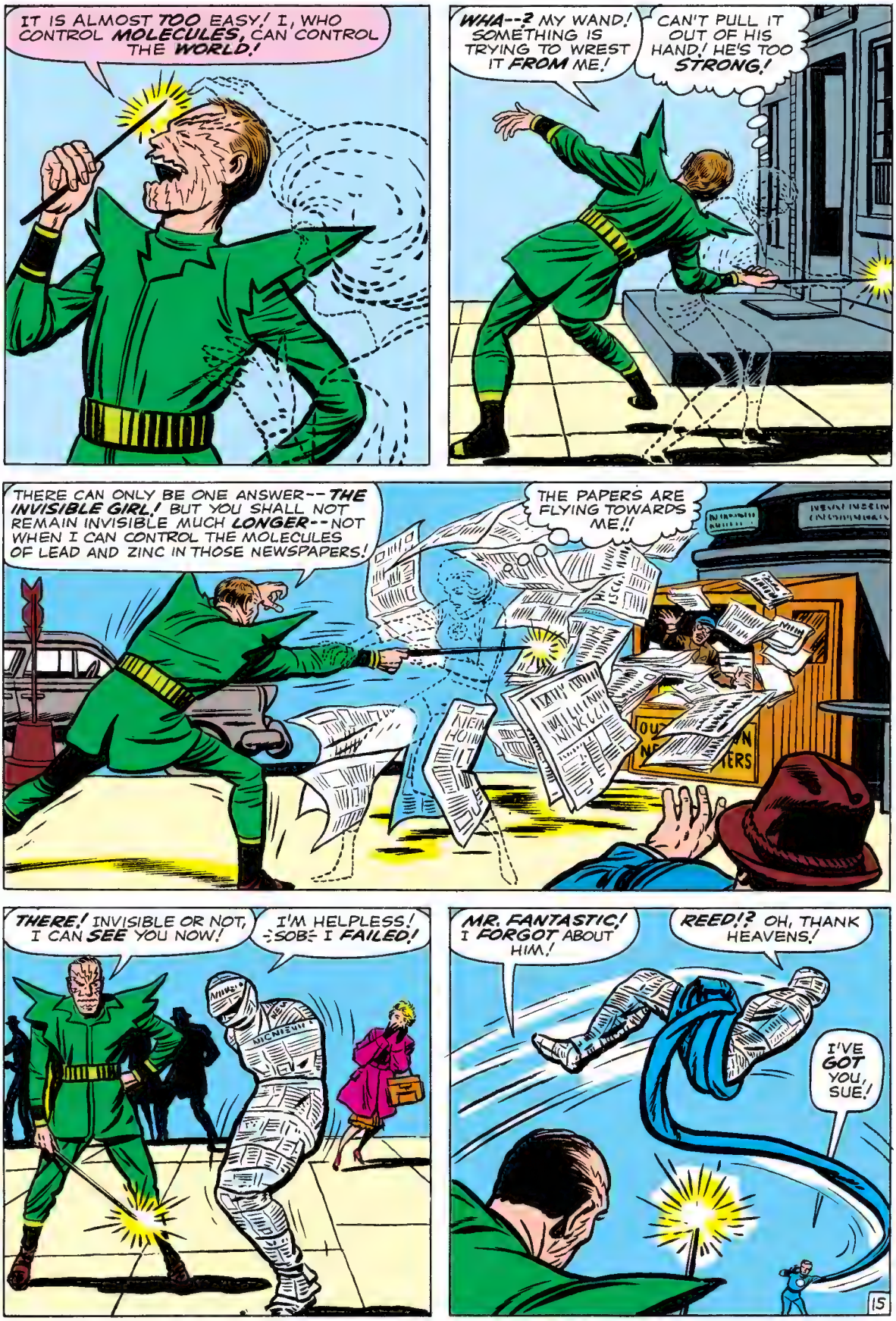

THE BLAMED THINGS ARE CLOSIN' IN ON ME! TOO MANY TO SHOVE ASIDE!
IF SOMETHIN' DOESN'T HAPPEN FAST, THEY'LL BE CALLIN' US THE FANTASTIC THREE!
...AND BASHFUL BENJAMIN WON'T BE ONE OF 'EM!


SUDDENLY, A DAZZLING STREAK OF FLAMING FURY BLAZES DOWN INTO THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN...
SOUND OFF, YOU OVERSTUFFED HAMBONE... WHERE ARE YOU?
UNDER THESE CRAZY PIPES, HOTHEAD! WHERE ELSE?!!

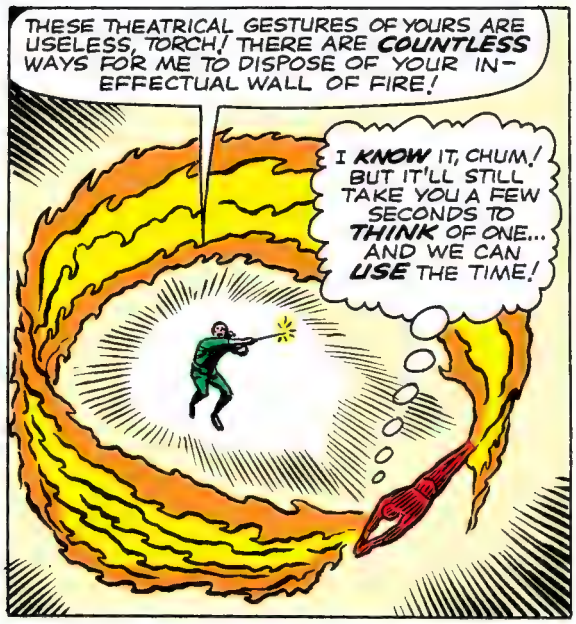

WATCH MY STEAM, LAUGHING BOY! I'LL MELT THOSE PIPES AWAY IN A MINUTE! LIKE THIS...!!
CAN'T YOU EVER DO ANYTHING WITHOUT MAKIN' A SPEECH!?

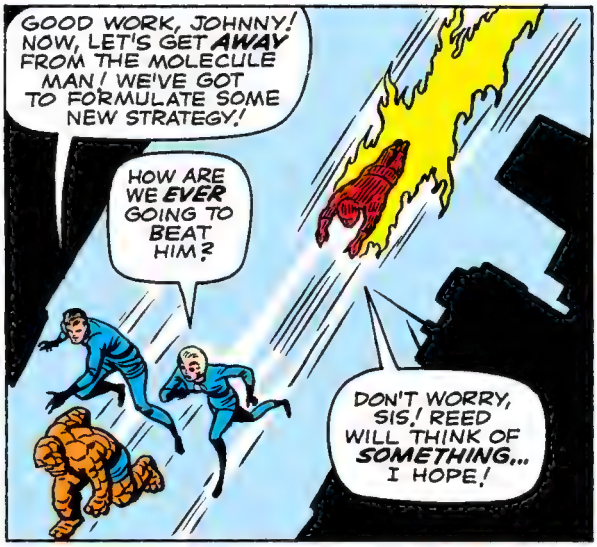
I GUESS YOU'RE OKAY, PARTNER--YOU'RE AS NASTY AS EVER!
NASTIER, SON! NASTIER!

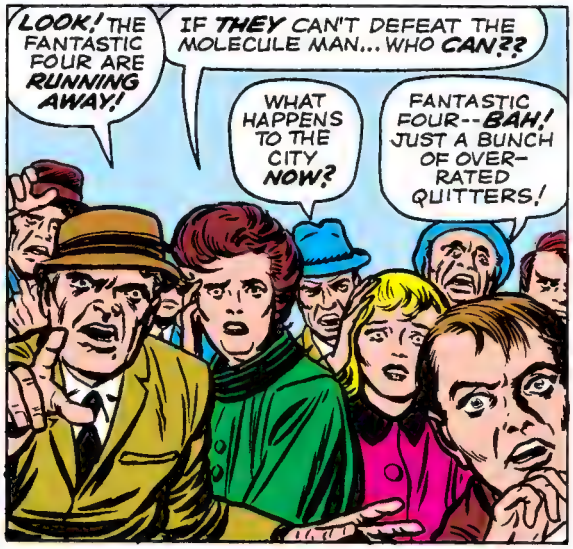

MEANWHILE, A SHORT DISTANCE ABOVE...
YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME TRY IT, REED! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!
IF BEN AND JOHNNY COME UP WHILE HE'S THERE...!
I KNOW, SUE! THEY WON'T HAVE A CHANCE AGAINST THAT STRANGE WAND OF HIS!
ALL RIGHT, HONEY--WE'LL DO IT! BUT NO SLIPS! I'LL ATTRACT HIS ATTENTION AND KEEP HIM BUSY...
...WHILE I TURN INVISIBLE AND TRY TO GET THAT HORRIBLE WAND AWAY FROM HIM!
NOW!
WE MUSTN'T FAIL! WE MUSTN'T!
YOU! DON'T YOU FOOLS EVER GIVE UP?
NOT TILL WE'RE BEATEN! IN OTHER WORDS... NEVER!
BEATEN? YOU MEAN LIKE THIS?
HE'S CAUSING THE BUILDING BRICKS TO FLY AT ME! BUT AT LEAST SUE STILL HAS A CHANCE!!
14

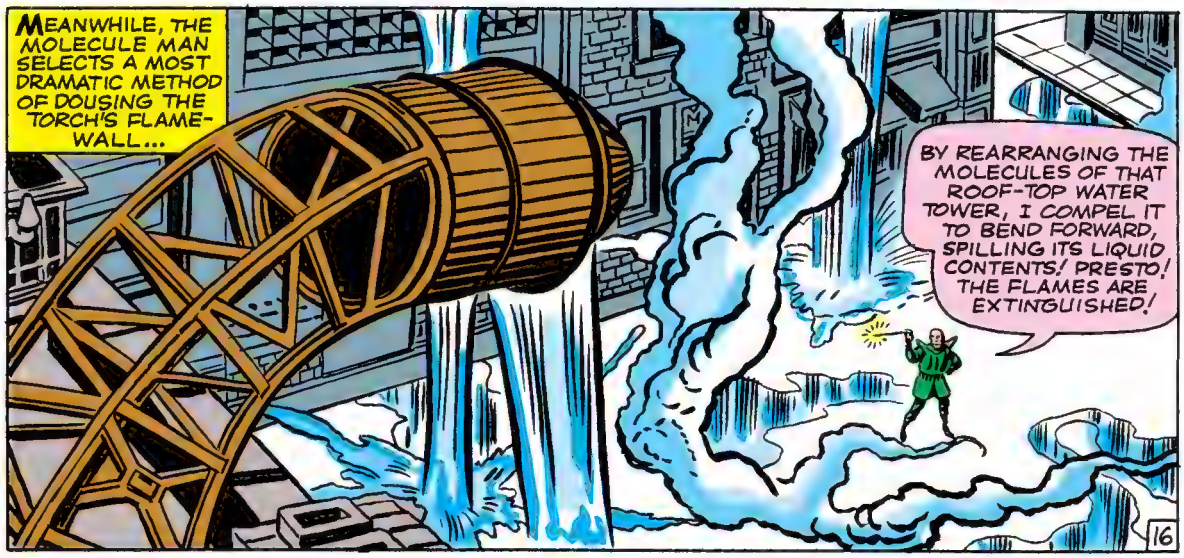

IT IS ALMOST TOO EASY! I, WHO CONTROL MOLECULES, CAN CONTROL THE WORLD!
WHA--? MY WAND! SOMETHING IS TRYING TO WREST IT FROM ME!
CAN'T PULL IT OUT OF HIS HAND! HE'S TOO STRONG!
THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE ANSWER--THE INVISIBLE GIRL! BUT YOU SHALL NOT REMAIN INVISIBLE MUCH LONGER--NOT WHEN I CAN CONTROL THE MOLECULES OF LEAD AND ZINC IN THOSE NEWSPAPERS!
THE PAPERS ARE FLYING TOWARDS ME!!
THERE! INVISIBLE OR NOT, I CAN SEE YOU NOW!
I'M HELPLESS! :SOB: I FAILED!
MR. FANTASTIC! I FORGOT ABOUT HIM!
REED!? OH, THANK HEAVENS!
I'VE GOT YOU, SUE!
15

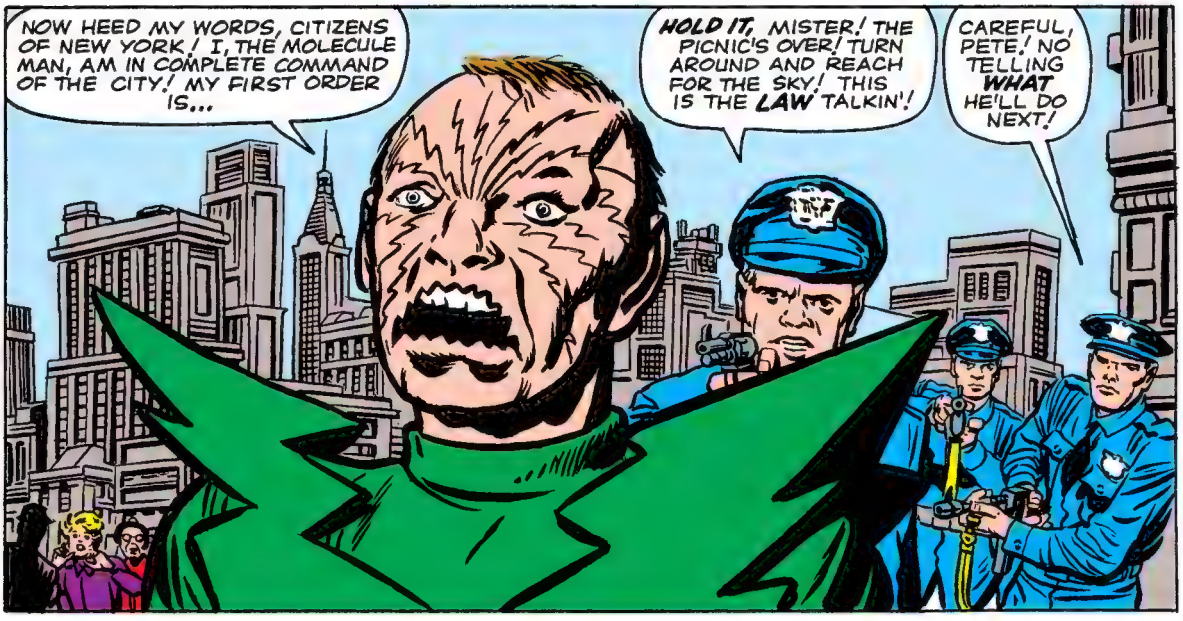
I'LL FENCE HIM IN WITH A WALL OF AURORA FLAME, REED, WHILE YOU THINK UP OUR NEXT MOVE!
NUTS! THAT CLOWN TORE THE COMIC PAGE IN HALF!
NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO NOW! WE'VE GOT TO STALL FOR TIME!


THESE THEATRICAL GESTURES OF YOURS ARE USELESS, TORCH! THERE ARE COUNTLESS WAYS FOR ME TO DISPOSE OF YOUR INEFFECTUAL WALL OF FIRE!
I KNOW IT, CHUM! BUT IT'LL STILL TAKE YOU A FEW SECONDS TO THINK OF ONE... AND WE CAN USE THE TIME!

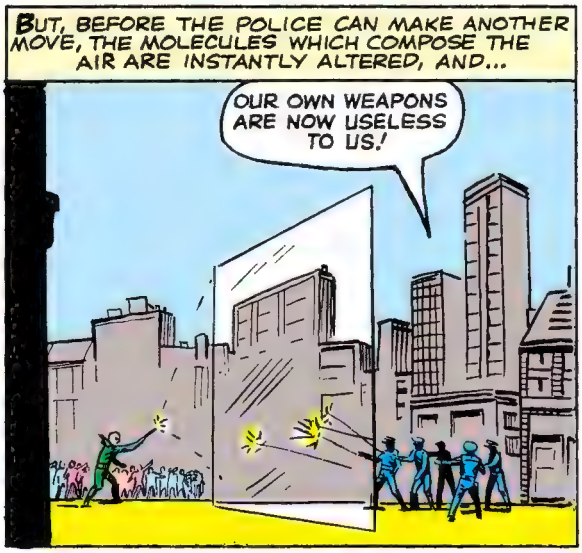

GOOD WORK, JOHNNY! NOW, LET'S GET AWAY FROM THE MOLECULE MAN! WE'VE GOT TO FORMULATE SOME NEW STRATEGY!
HOW ARE WE EVER GOING TO BEAT HIM?
DON'T WORRY, SIS! REED WILL THINK OF SOMETHING... I HOPE!

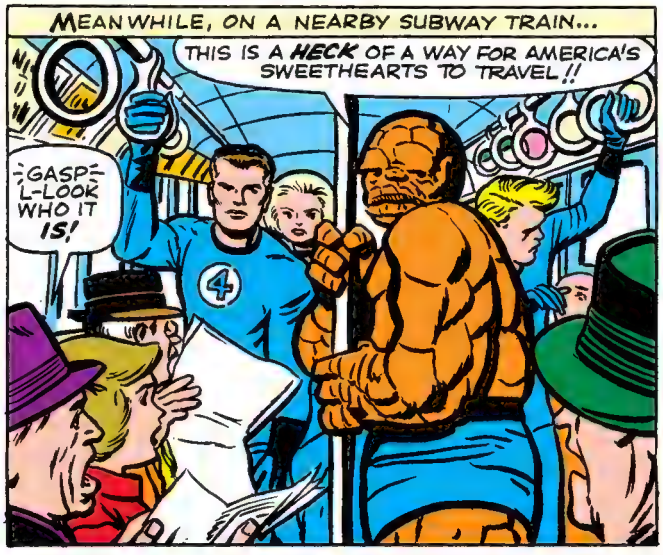

LOOK! THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE RUNNING AWAY!
IF THEY CAN'T DEFEAT THE MOLECULE MAN... WHO CAN??
WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CITY NOW?
FANTASTIC FOUR--BAH! JUST A BUNCH OF OVER-RATED QUITTERS!


MEANWHILE, THE MOLECULE MAN SELECTS A MOST DRAMATIC METHOD OF DOUSING THE TORCH'S FLAME-WALL...
BY REARRANGING THE MOLECULES OF THAT ROOF-TOP WATER TOWER, I COMPEL IT TO BEND FORWARD, SPILLING ITS LIQUID CONTENTS! PRESTO! THE FLAMES ARE EXTINGUISHED!

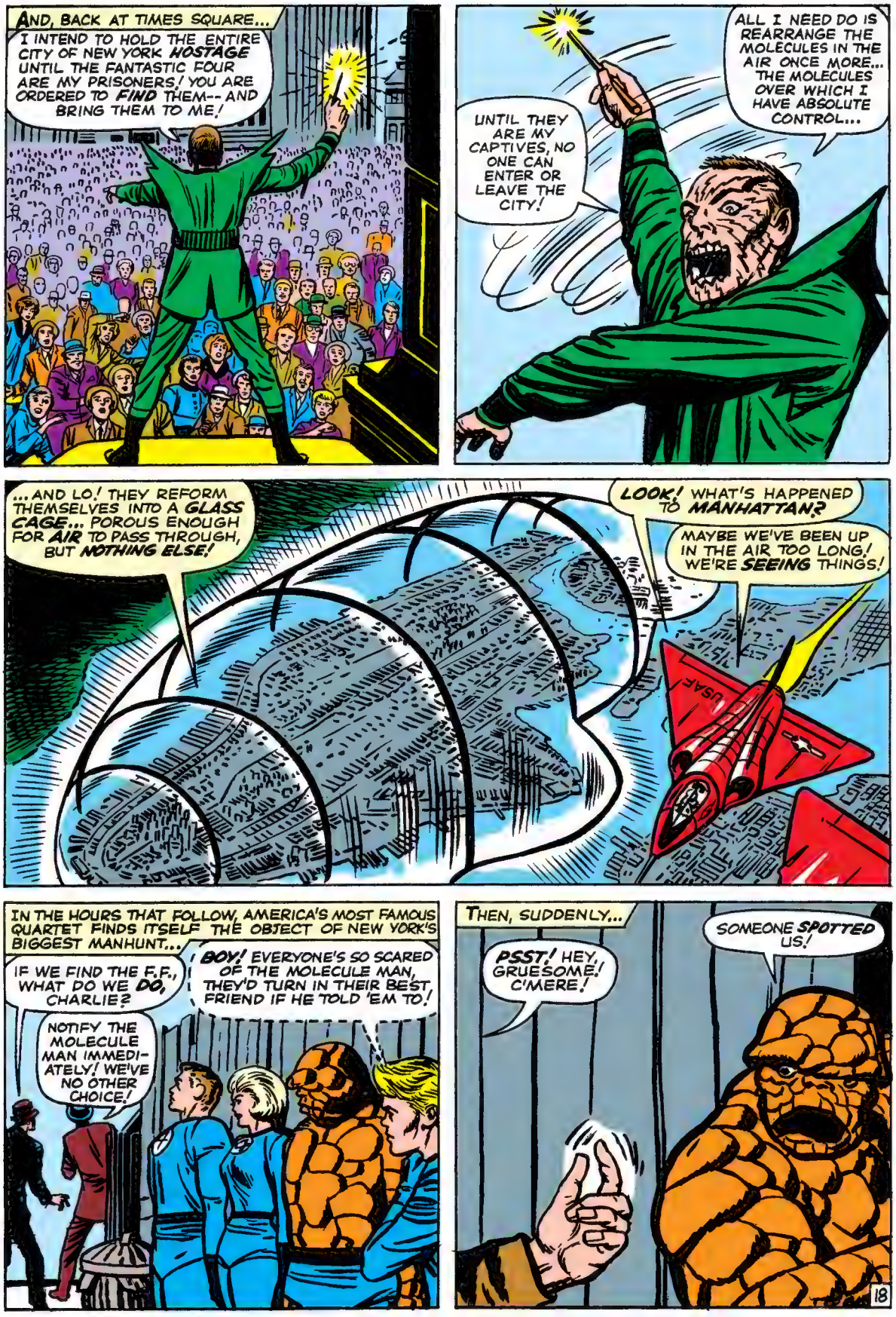

NOW HEED MY WORDS, CITIZENS OF NEW YORK! I, THE MOLECULE MAN, AM IN COMPLETE COMMAND OF THE CITY! MY FIRST ORDER IS...
HOLD IT, MISTER! THE PICNIC'S OVER! TURN AROUND AND REACH FOR THE SKY! THIS IS THE LAW TALKIN'!
CAREFUL, PETE! NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL DO NEXT!

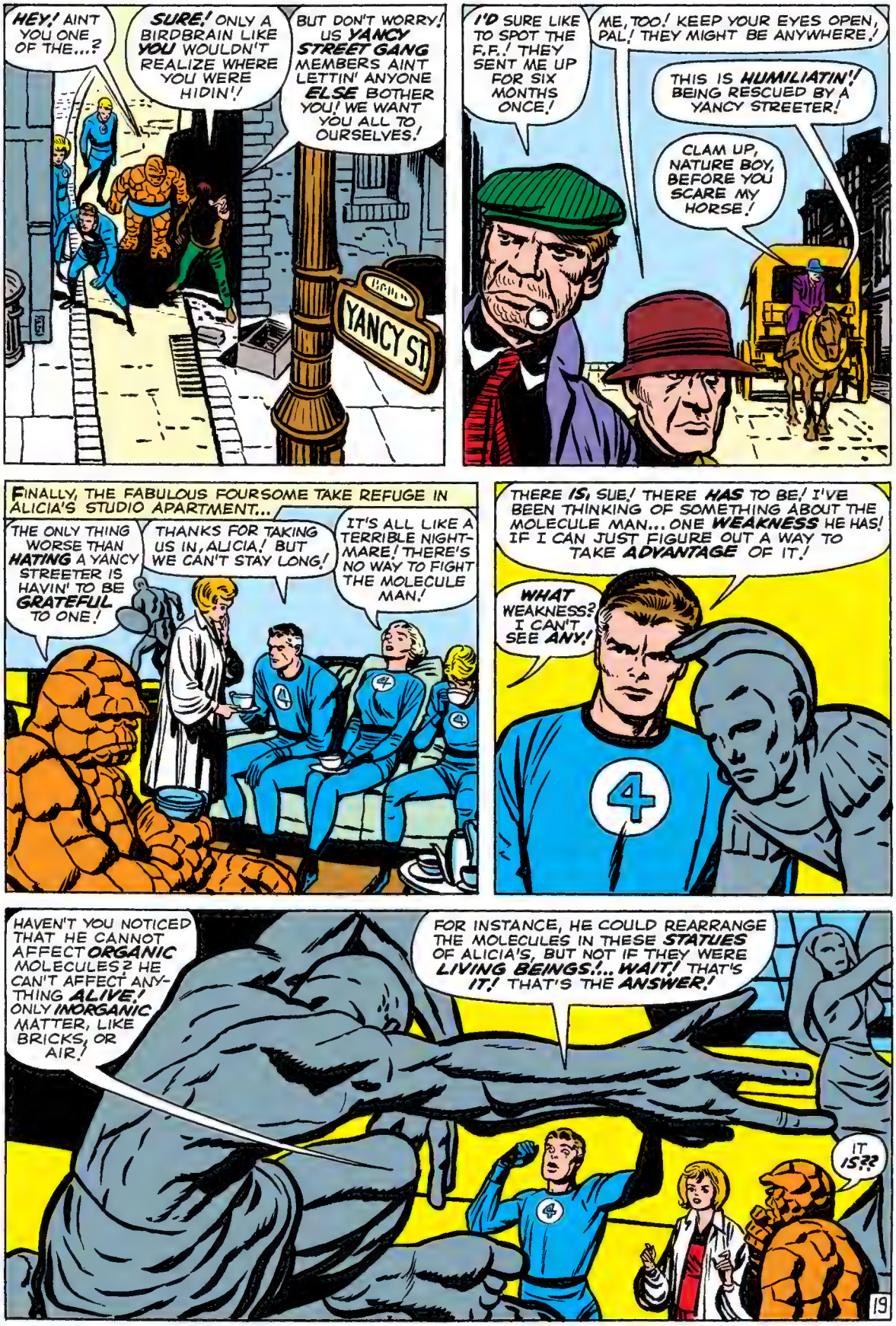
CAN IT BE THAT YOU STILL DON'T REALIZE HOW POWERLESS MANKIND IS TO STOP ME?? IN ORDER TO ENFORCE YOUR WILL, YOU NEED WEAPONS! BUT, SEE WHAT I CAN DO TO YOUR FIREARMS... WATCH!!
DROP THAT WAND!!


BUT, BEFORE THE POLICE CAN MAKE ANOTHER MOVE, THE MOLECULES WHICH COMPOSE THE AIR ARE INSTANTLY ALTERED, AND...
OUR OWN WEAPONS ARE NOW USELESS TO US!

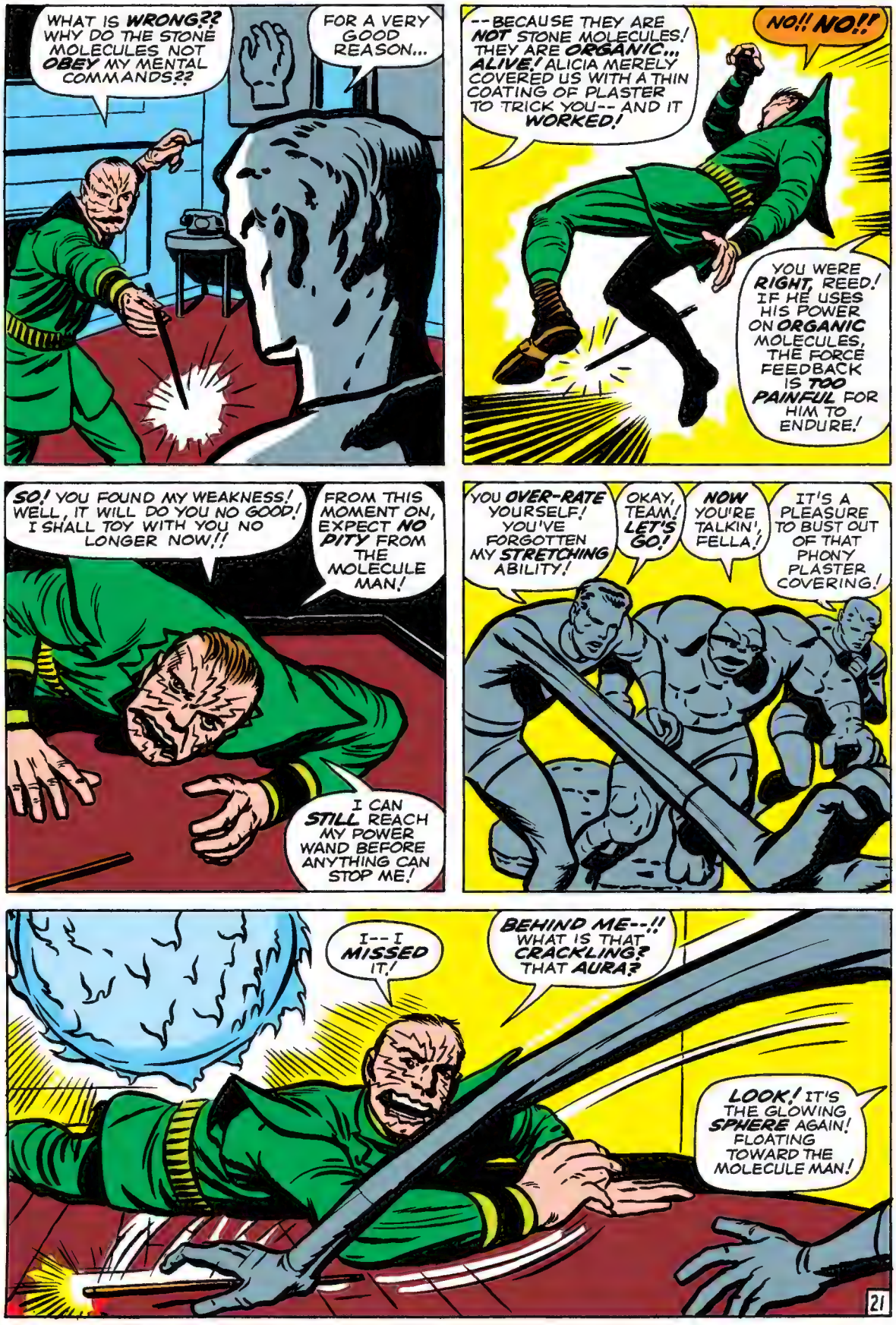

MEANWHILE, ON A NEARBY SUBWAY TRAIN...
THIS IS A HECK OF A WAY FOR AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS TO TRAVEL!!
-GASP- L-LOOK WHO IT IS!
4

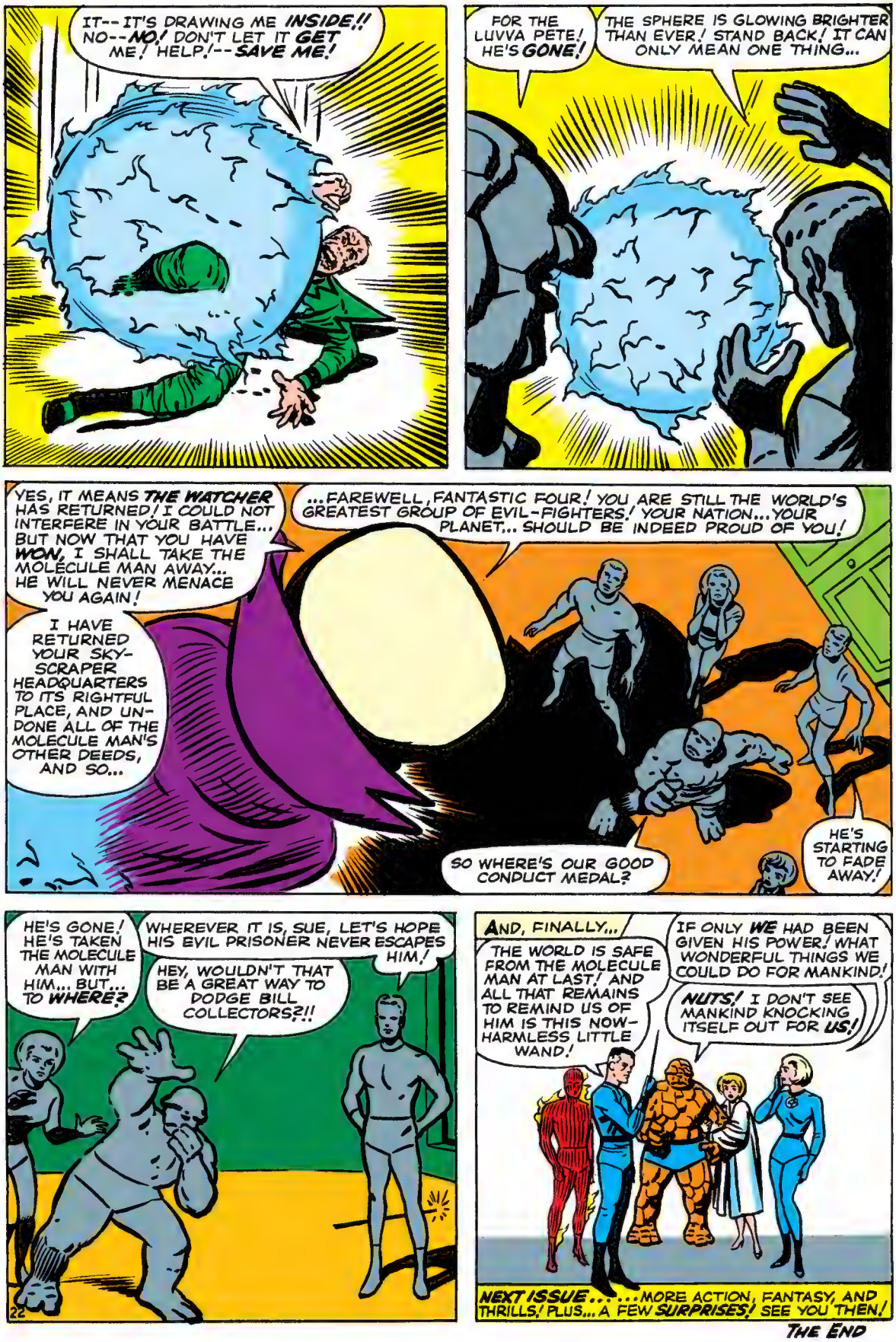
MINUTES LATER, AT THE NEXT STATION...
LET'S LOSE OURSELVES ON THE STREET BEFORE A CROWD STARTS FOLLOWING US!
YOU BETTER THINK UP A PLAN SOON! I'M TOO OLD TO BE PLAYIN' FOLLOW-THE-LEADER!


AND, BACK AT TIMES SQUARE...
I INTEND TO HOLD THE ENTIRE CITY OF NEW YORK HOSTAGE UNTIL THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE MY PRISONERS! YOU ARE ORDERED TO FIND THEM-- AND BRING THEM TO ME!
ALL I NEED DO IS REARRANGE THE MOLECULES IN THE AIR ONCE MORE... THE MOLECULES OVER WHICH I HAVE ABSOLUTE CONTROL...
UNTIL THEY ARE MY CAPTIVES, NO ONE CAN ENTER OR LEAVE THE CITY!
...AND LO! THEY REFORM THEMSELVES INTO A GLASS CAGE... POROUS ENOUGH FOR AIR TO PASS THROUGH, BUT NOTHING ELSE!
LOOK! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MANHATTAN?
MAYBE WE'VE BEEN UP IN THE AIR TOO LONG! WE'RE SEEING THINGS!
USAF
IN THE HOURS THAT FOLLOW, AMERICA'S MOST FAMOUS QUARTET FINDS ITSELF THE OBJECT OF NEW YORK'S BIGGEST MANHUNT...
IF WE FIND THE F.F., WHAT DO WE DO, CHARLIE?
BOY! EVERYONE'S SO SCARED OF THE MOLECULE MAN, THEY'D TURN IN THEIR BEST FRIEND IF HE TOLD 'EM TO!
NOTIFY THE MOLECULE MAN IMMEDIATELY! WE'VE NO OTHER CHOICE!
THEN, SUDDENLY...
PSST! HEY, GRUESOME! C'MERE!
SOMEONE SPOTTED US!
18


HEY! AINT YOU ONE OF THE...?
SURE! ONLY A BIRDBRAIN LIKE YOU WOULDN'T REALIZE WHERE YOU WERE HIDIN'!
BUT DON'T WORRY! US YANCY STREET GANG MEMBERS AINT LETTIN' ANYONE ELSE BOTHER YOU! WE WANT YOU ALL TO OURSELVES!
YANCY ST.
I'D SURE LIKE TO SPOT THE F.F.! THEY SENT ME UP FOR SIX MONTHS ONCE!
ME, TOO! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN, PAL! THEY MIGHT BE ANYWHERE!
THIS IS HUMILIATIN'! BEING RESCUED BY A YANCY STREETER!
CLAM UP, NATURE BOY, BEFORE YOU SCARE MY HORSE!
FINALLY, THE FABULOUS FOURSOME TAKE REFUGE IN ALICIA'S STUDIO APARTMENT...
THE ONLY THING WORSE THAN HATING A YANCY STREETER IS HAVIN' TO BE GRATEFUL TO ONE!
THANKS FOR TAKING US IN, ALICIA! BUT WE CAN'T STAY LONG!
IT'S ALL LIKE A TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE! THERE'S NO WAY TO FIGHT THE MOLECULE MAN!
THERE IS, SUE! THERE HAS TO BE! I'VE BEEN THINKING OF SOMETHING ABOUT THE MOLECULE MAN... ONE WEAKNESS HE HAS! IF I CAN JUST FIGURE OUT A WAY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT!
WHAT WEAKNESS? I CAN'T SEE ANY!
HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED THAT HE CANNOT AFFECT ORGANIC MOLECULES? HE CAN'T AFFECT ANYTHING ALIVE! ONLY INORGANIC MATTER, LIKE BRICKS, OR AIR!
FOR INSTANCE, HE COULD REARRANGE THE MOLECULES IN THESE STATUES OF ALICIA'S, BUT NOT IF THEY WERE LIVING BEINGS!... WAIT! THAT'S IT! THAT'S THE ANSWER!
IT IS??
19

ALICIA, I WANT YOU TO MODEL FOUR STATUES--AS FAST AS YOUR TALENTED LITTLE FINGERS CAN DO IT!
BUT...
LET HIM EXPLAIN, BABY! I'VE SEEN THAT NUTTY LOOK IN HIS EYES BEFORE! HE'S EITHER GOT A BRILLIANT PLAN, OR HE'S LOST ALL HIS MARBLES!
LATER THAT DAY, AFTER ALICIA HAS COMPLETED HER STRANGE ASSIGNMENT...
THIS WILL BRING THE MOLECULE MAN HERE ON THE DOUBLE!
4
SO! THEY DECIDED TO GIVE THEMSELVES UP! IT WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE OUTCOME!
WITH MY GREAT POWER, I CAN TRAVEL ANY WAY I CHOOSE... SO LONG AS I CAN REARRANGE THE DUST MOLECULES IN THE AIR TO TAKE ANY FORM I DESIRE!
YOU! SPEAK! I SAW THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S FLARE SIGNAL! WHERE ARE THEY?
THEY WILL BE RIGHT BACK! BUT FIRST, I HAVE A TRIBUTE FOR YOU--A STATUE I CREATED!
THE FANTASTIC FOUR! VERY CLEVER OF YOU! IT WILL AMUSE ME TO REARRANGE THE STATUE'S MOLECULES...LIKE THIS!
20


WHAT IS WRONG?? WHY DO THE STONE MOLECULES NOT OBEY MY MENTAL COMMANDS??
FOR A VERY GOOD REASON...
--BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT STONE MOLECULES! THEY ARE ORGANIC... ALIVE! ALICIA MERELY COVERED US WITH A THIN COATING OF PLASTER TO TRICK YOU-- AND IT WORKED!
NO!! NO!!
YOU WERE RIGHT, REED! IF HE USES HIS POWER ON ORGANIC MOLECULES, THE FORCE FEEDBACK IS TOO PAINFUL FOR HIM TO ENDURE!
SO! YOU FOUND MY WEAKNESS! WELL, IT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD! I SHALL TOY WITH YOU NO LONGER NOW!!
FROM THIS MOMENT ON, EXPECT NO PITY FROM THE MOLECULE MAN!
I CAN STILL REACH MY POWER WAND BEFORE ANYTHING CAN STOP ME!
YOU OVER-RATE YOURSELF! YOU'VE FORGOTTEN MY STRETCHING ABILITY!
OKAY, TEAM! LET'S GO!
NOW YOU'RE TALKIN', FELLA!
IT'S A PLEASURE TO BUST OUT OF THAT PHONY PLASTER COVERING!
I--I MISSED IT!
BEHIND ME--!! WHAT IS THAT CRACKLING? THAT AURA?
LOOK! IT'S THE GLOWING SPHERE AGAIN! FLOATING TOWARD THE MOLECULE MAN!
21


IT--IT'S DRAWING ME INSIDE!! NO--NO! DON'T LET IT GET ME! HELP!--SAVE ME!
FOR THE LUVVA PETE! HE'S GONE!
THE SPHERE IS GLOWING BRIGHTER THAN EVER! STAND BACK! IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING...
YES, IT MEANS THE WATCHER HAS RETURNED! I COULD NOT INTERFERE IN YOUR BATTLE... BUT NOW THAT YOU HAVE WON, I SHALL TAKE THE MOLECULE MAN AWAY... HE WILL NEVER MENACE YOU AGAIN!
...FAREWELL, FANTASTIC FOUR! YOU ARE STILL THE WORLD'S GREATEST GROUP OF EVIL-FIGHTERS! YOUR NATION... YOUR PLANET... SHOULD BE INDEED PROUD OF YOU!
I HAVE RETURNED YOUR SKY-SCRAPER HEADQUARTERS TO ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE, AND UN-DONE ALL OF THE MOLECULE MAN'S OTHER DEEDS, AND SO...
SO WHERE'S OUR GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL?
HE'S STARTING TO FADE AWAY!
HE'S GONE! HE'S TAKEN THE MOLECULE MAN WITH HIM... BUT... TO WHERE?
WHEREVER IT IS, SUE, LET'S HOPE HIS EVIL PRISONER NEVER ESCAPES HIM!
HEY, WOULDN'T THAT BE A GREAT WAY TO DODGE BILL COLLECTORS?!!
AND, FINALLY...
THE WORLD IS SAFE FROM THE MOLECULE MAN AT LAST! AND ALL THAT REMAINS TO REMIND US OF HIM IS THIS NOW-HARMLESS LITTLE WAND!
IF ONLY WE HAD BEEN GIVEN HIS POWER! WHAT WONDERFUL THINGS WE COULD DO FOR MANKIND!
NUTS! I DON'T SEE MANKIND KNOCKING ITSELF OUT FOR US!
NEXT ISSUE... ...MORE ACTION, FANTASY, AND THRILLS! PLUS... A FEW SURPRISES! SEE YOU THEN!
THE END
22

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"THE UNDERSEA LEGIONS OF SUB-MARINER!"
AT LAST! SUB-MARINER FINDS HIS LONG-LOST RACE!
AND SO BEGINS THE MOST FANTASTIC BATTLE OF ALL TIME!
INSIDE THE PAGES OF THIS, THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
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THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR PRESENT:
SUB-MARINER
Versus THE HUMAN RACE!
THE LONGEST UNINTERRUPTED SUPER-EPIC OF ITS KIND EVER PUBLISHED!!
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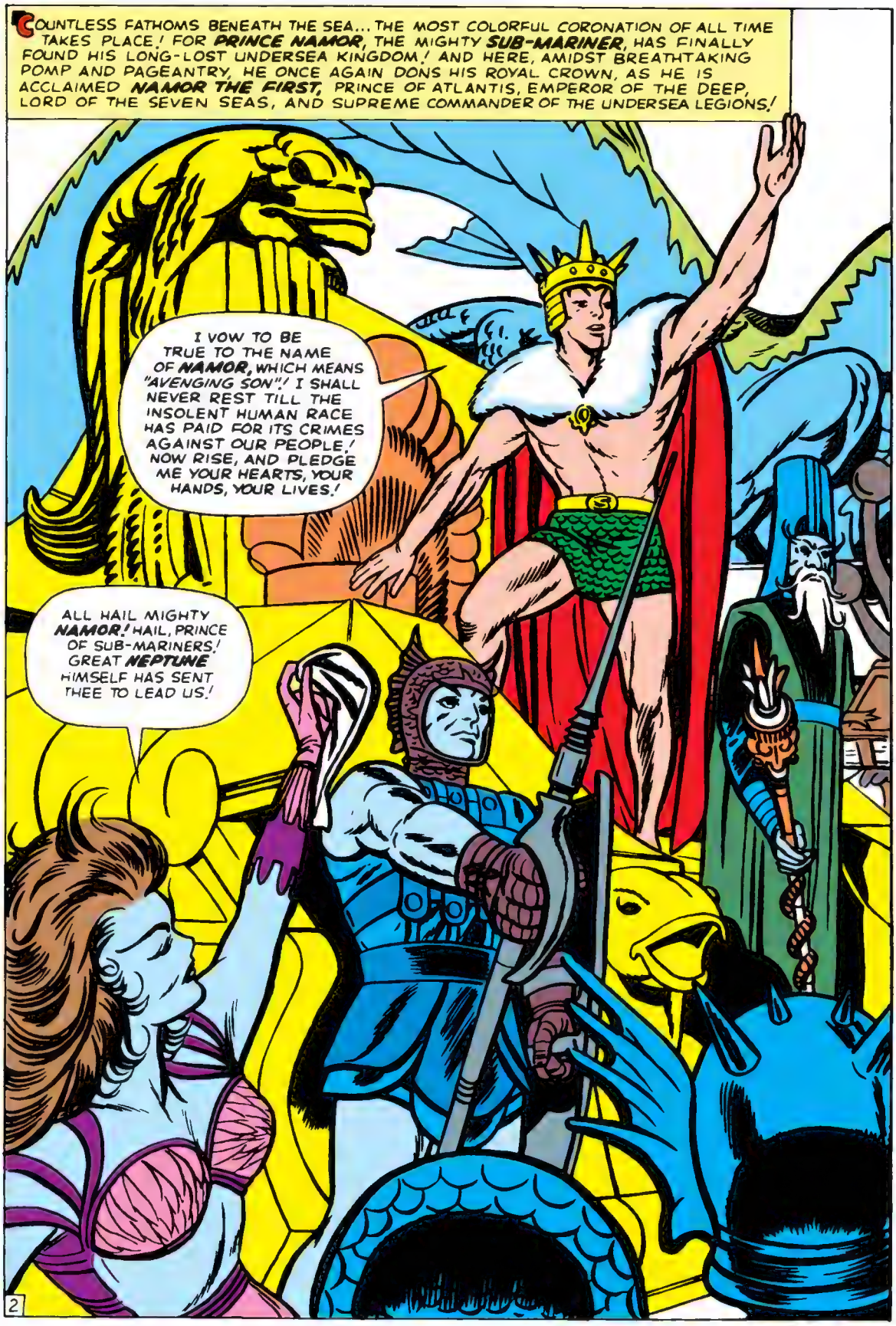
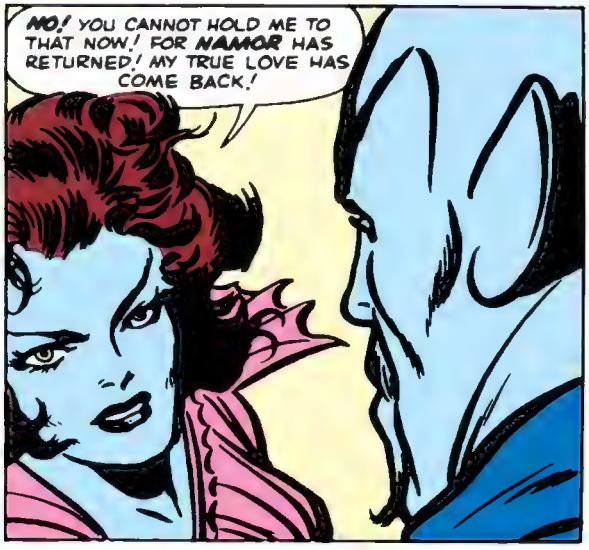
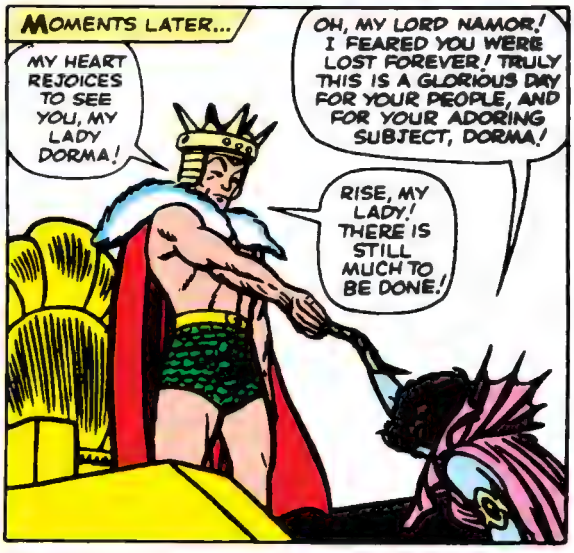

COUNTLESS FATHOMS BENEATH THE SEA... THE MOST COLORFUL CORONATION OF ALL TIME TAKES PLACE! FOR PRINCE NAMOR, THE MIGHTY SUB-MARINER, HAS FINALLY FOUND HIS LONG-LOST UNDERSEA KINGDOM! AND HERE, AMIDST BREATHTAKING POMP AND PAGEANTRY, HE ONCE AGAIN DONS HIS ROYAL CROWN, AS HE IS ACCLAIMED NAMOR THE FIRST, PRINCE OF ATLANTIS, EMPEROR OF THE DEEP, LORD OF THE SEVEN SEAS, AND SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE UNDERSEA LEGIONS!
I VOW TO BE TRUE TO THE NAME OF NAMOR, WHICH MEANS "AVENGING SON"! I SHALL NEVER REST TILL THE INSOLENT HUMAN RACE HAS PAID FOR ITS CRIMES AGAINST OUR PEOPLE! NOW RISE, AND PLEDGE ME YOUR HEARTS, YOUR HANDS, YOUR LIVES!
ALL HAIL MIGHTY NAMOR! HAIL, PRINCE OF SUB-MARINERS! GREAT NEPTUNE HIMSELF HAS SENT THEE TO LEAD US!

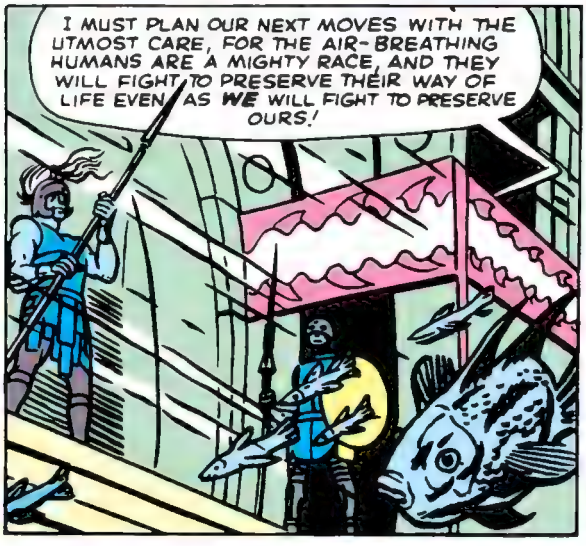
HAIL, HAIL! ALL HOMAGE TO THE NOBLE PROTECTOR OF THE DEEP! LONG LIVE NAMOR! LONG LIVE ATLANTIS! HAIL TO THE GODS WHO HAVE RETURNED OUR MIGHTY LEADER!
WHERE YOU LEAD, WE WILL FOLLOW! WHERE YOU COMMAND, WE WILL OBEY! FOR YOU ARE TRULY NAMOR, PRINCE OF THE BLOOD, AND WE ARE YOUR SUBJECTS!

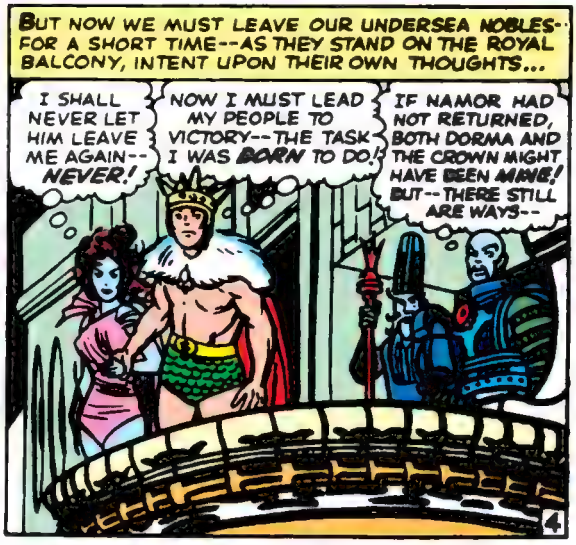
BUT, AMONG THE CHEERING MULTITUDES, STAND TWO FIGURES... EACH WITH DIFFERENT EMOTIONS BLAZING WITHIN.!
AT LAST! AT LAST MY LOVED ONE HAS RETURNED TO ME!
WHAT WORDS DO YOU UTTER, MY LADY DORMA?!!

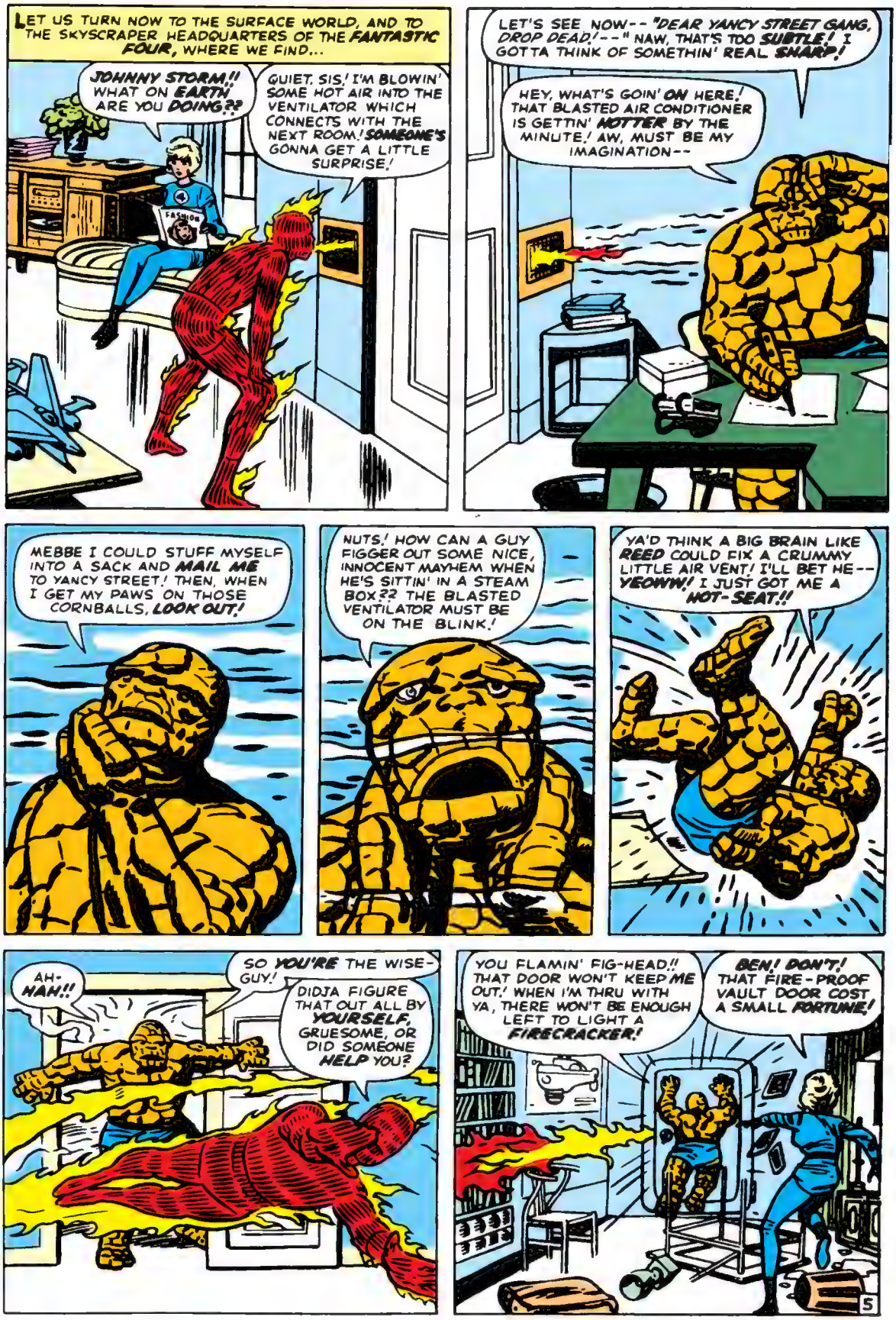
RELEASE MY HAND, KRANG! I MUST GO TO HIM!
WAIT! HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR VOW? YOU ARE PLEDGED TO BECOME THE BRIDE OF WARLORD KRANG!

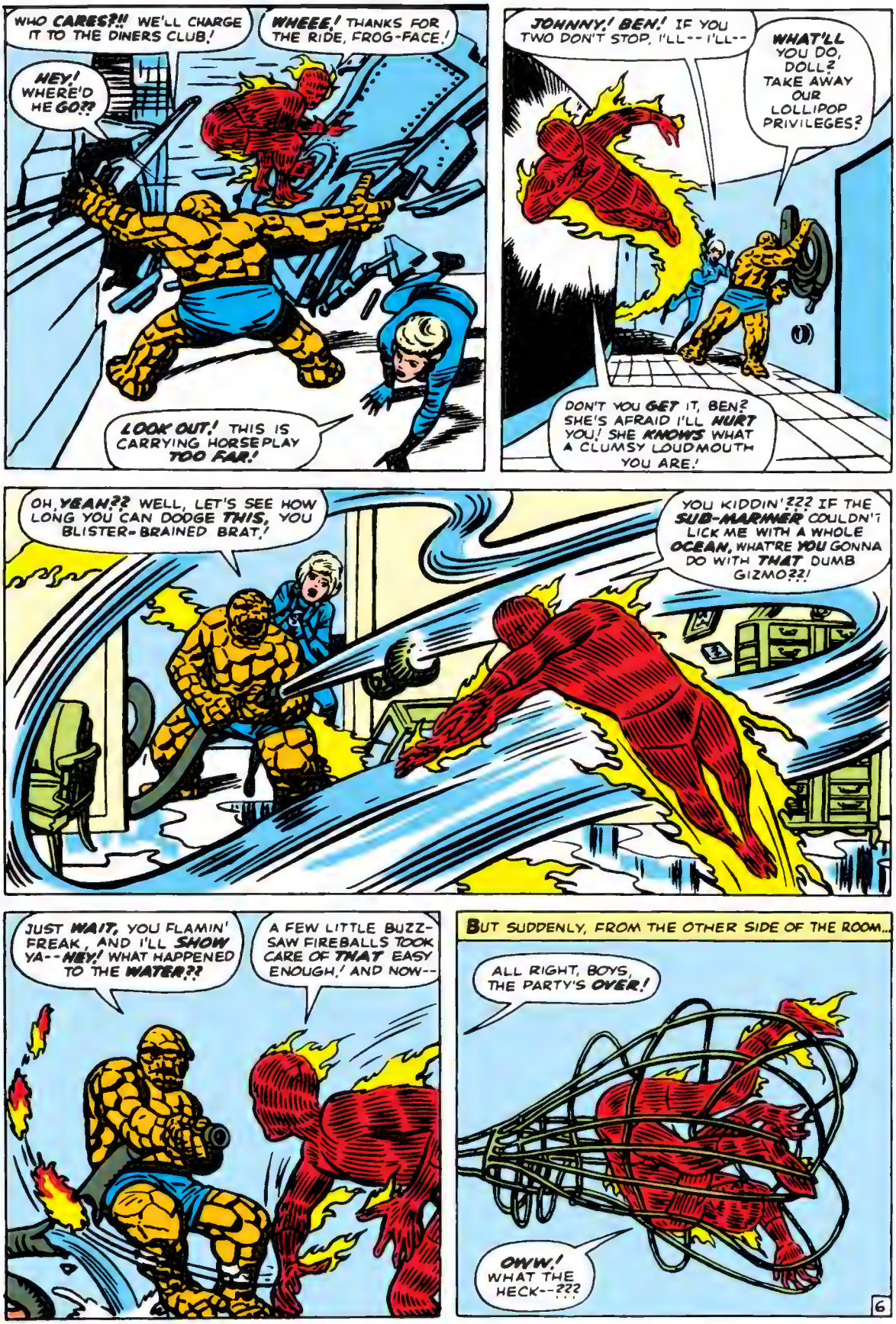

NO! YOU CANNOT HOLD ME TO THAT NOW! FOR NAMOR HAS RETURNED! MY TRUE LOVE HAS COME BACK!

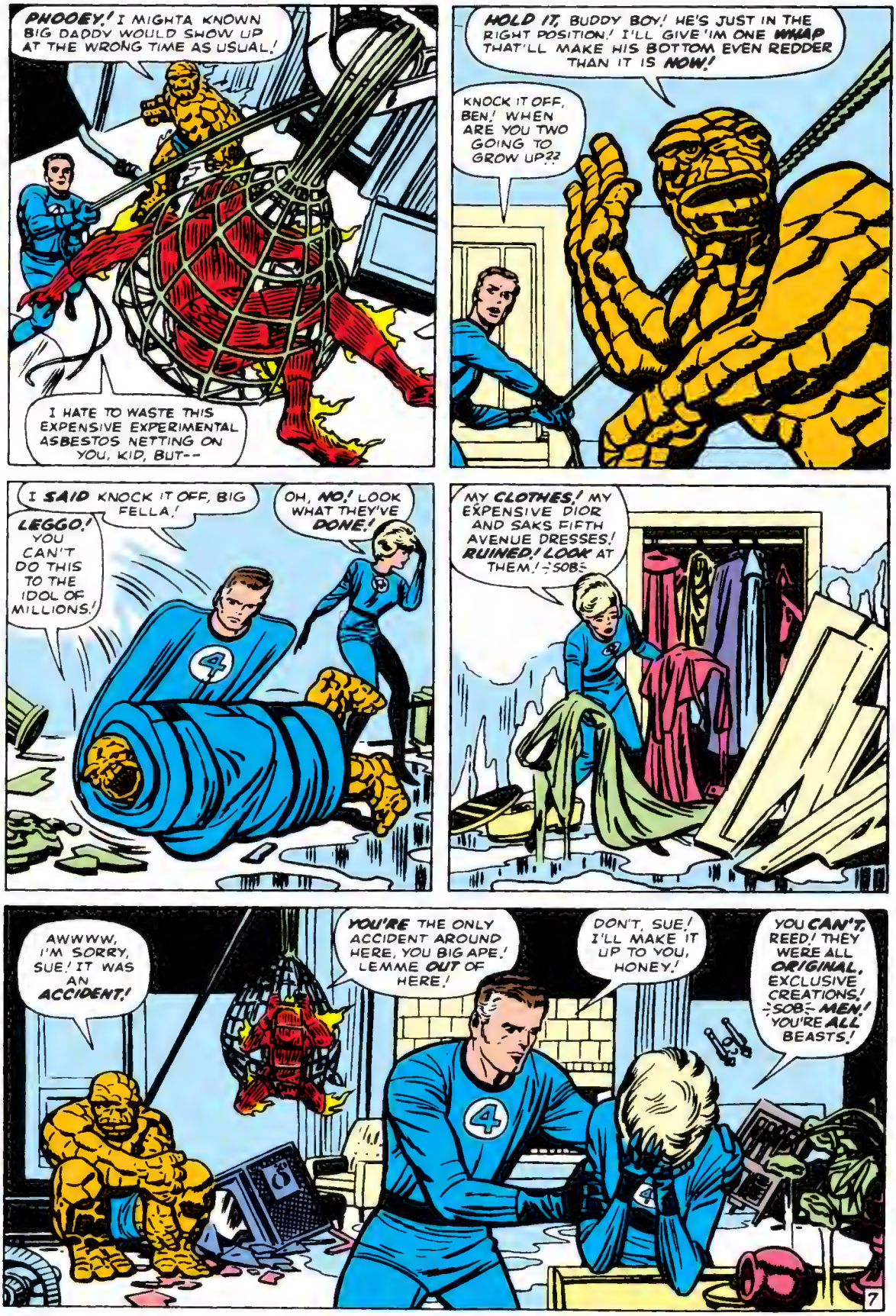

MOMENTS LATER...
MY HEART REJOICES TO SEE YOU, MY LADY DORMA!
OH, MY LORD NAMOR! I FEARED YOU WERE LOST FOREVER! TRULY THIS IS A GLORIOUS DAY FOR YOUR PEOPLE, AND FOR YOUR ADORING SUBJECT, DORMA!
RISE, MY LADY! THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE!


I MUST PLAN OUR NEXT MOVES WITH THE UTMOST CARE, FOR THE AIR-BREATHING HUMANS ARE A MIGHTY RACE, AND THEY WILL FIGHT TO PRESERVE THEIR WAY OF LIFE EVEN AS WE WILL FIGHT TO PRESERVE OURS!

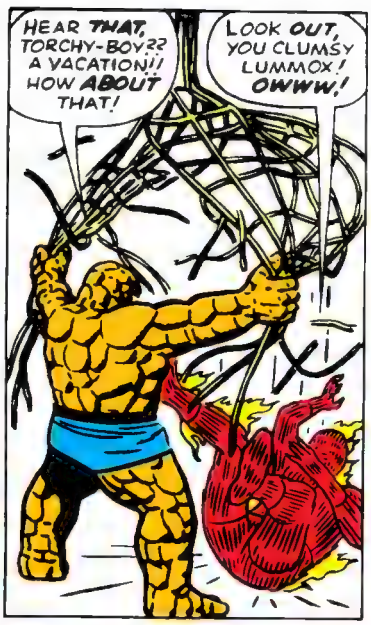

BUT NOW WE MUST LEAVE OUR UNDERSEA NOBLES-- FOR A SHORT TIME--AS THEY STAND ON THE ROYAL BALCONY, INTENT UPON THEIR OWN THOUGHTS...
I SHALL NEVER LET HIM LEAVE ME AGAIN-- NEVER!
NOW I MUST LEAD MY PEOPLE TO VICTORY--THE TASK I WAS BORN TO DO!
IF NAMOR HAD NOT RETURNED, BOTH DORMA AND THE CROWN MIGHT HAVE BEEN MINE! BUT--THERE STILL ARE WAYS--


LET US TURN NOW TO THE SURFACE WORLD, AND TO THE SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, WHERE WE FIND...
JOHNNY STORM!! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING??
QUIET, SIS.! I'M BLOWIN' SOME HOT AIR INTO THE VENTILATOR WHICH CONNECTS WITH THE NEXT ROOM! SOMEONE'S GONNA GET A LITTLE SURPRISE!
FASHION
LET'S SEE NOW-- "DEAR YANCY STREET GANG, DROP DEAD!"--" NAW, THAT'S TOO SUBTLE! I GOTTA THINK OF SOMETHIN' REAL SHARP!
HEY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE! THAT BLASTED AIR CONDITIONER IS GETTIN' HOTTER BY THE MINUTE! AW, MUST BE MY IMAGINATION--
MEBBE I COULD STUFF MYSELF INTO A SACK AND MAIL ME TO YANCY STREET! THEN, WHEN I GET MY PAWS ON THOSE CORNBALLS, LOOK OUT!
NUTS! HOW CAN A GUY FIGGER OUT SOME NICE, INNOCENT MAYHEM WHEN HE'S SITTIN' IN A STEAM BOX?? THE BLASTED VENTILATOR MUST BE ON THE BLINK!
YA'D THINK A BIG BRAIN LIKE REED COULD FIX A CRUMMY LITTLE AIR VENT! I'LL BET HE-- YEOWW! I JUST GOT ME A HOT-SEAT!!
AH-NAH!!
SO YOU'RE THE WISE-GUY!
DIDJA FIGURE THAT OUT ALL BY YOURSELF, GRUESOME, OR DID SOMEONE HELP YOU?
YOU FLAMIN' FIG-HEAD!! THAT DOOR WON'T KEEP ME OUT! WHEN I'M THRU WITH YA, THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH LEFT TO LIGHT A FIRECRACKER!
BEN! DON'T! THAT FIRE-PROOF VAULT DOOR COST A SMALL FORTUNE!
5

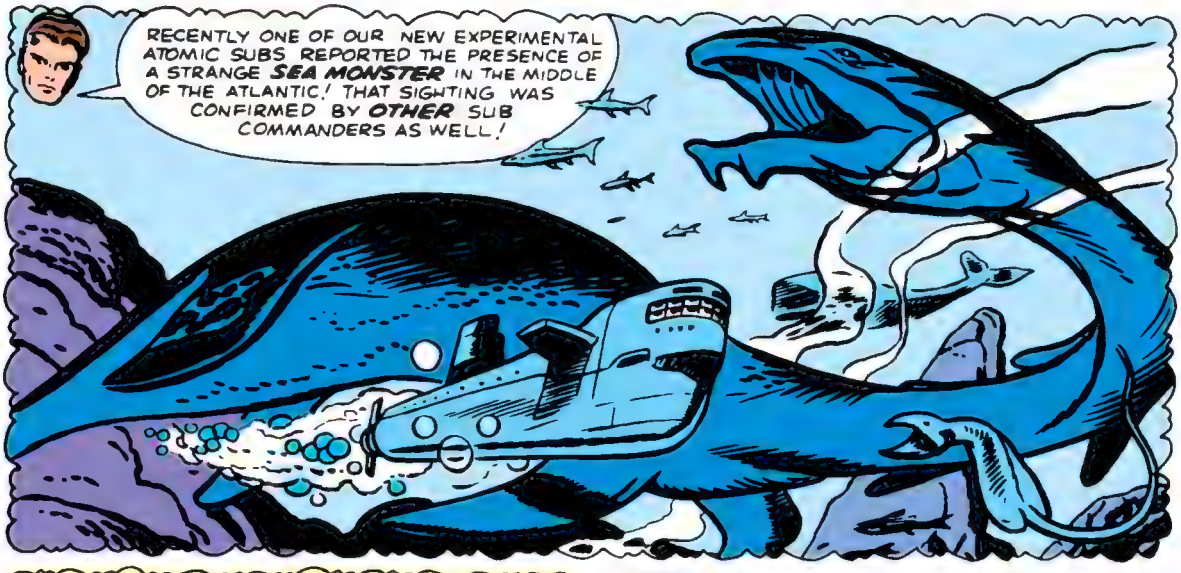

WHO CARES?!! WE'LL CHARGE IT TO THE DINERS CLUB!
WHEEEE! THANKS FOR THE RIDE, FROG-FACE!
HEY! WHERE'D HE GO??
LOOK OUT! THIS IS CARRYING HORSEPLAY TOO FAR!
JOHNNY! BEN! IF YOU TWO DON'T STOP, I'LL--I'LL--
WHAT'LL YOU DO, DOLL? TAKE AWAY OUR LOLLIPOP PRIVILEGES?
DON'T YOU GET IT, BEN? SHE'S AFRAID I'LL HURT YOU! SHE KNOWS WHAT A CLUMSY LOUDMOUTH YOU ARE!
OH, YEAH?? WELL, LET'S SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN DODGE THIS, YOU BLISTER-BRAINED BRAT!
YOU KIDDIN'??? IF THE SUB-MARINER COULDN'T LICK ME WITH A WHOLE OCEAN, WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH THAT DUMB GIZMO??!
JUST WAIT, YOU FLAMIN' FREAK, AND I'LL SHOW YA--HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WATER??
A FEW LITTLE BUZZ-SAW FIREBALLS TOOK CARE OF THAT EASY ENOUGH! AND NOW--
BUT SUDDENLY, FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM...
ALL RIGHT, BOYS, THE PARTY'S OVER!
OWW! WHAT THE HECK--???

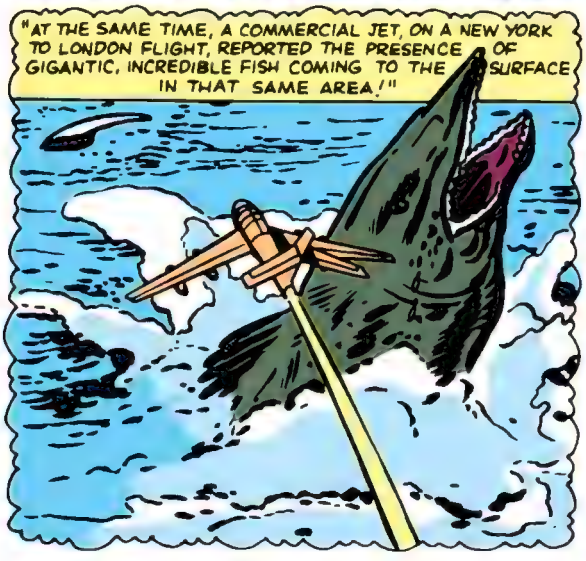

PHOOEY! I MIGHTA KNOWN BIG DADDY WOULD SHOW UP AT THE WRONG TIME AS USUAL!
I HATE TO WASTE THIS EXPENSIVE EXPERIMENTAL ASBESTOS NETTING ON YOU, KID, BUT--
HOLD IT, BUDDY BOY! HE'S JUST IN THE RIGHT POSITION! I'LL GIVE 'IM ONE WHAP THAT'LL MAKE HIS BOTTOM EVEN REDDER THAN IT IS NOW!
KNOCK IT OFF, BEN! WHEN ARE YOU TWO GOING TO GROW UP??
I SAID KNOCK IT OFF, BIG FELLA!
LEGGO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO THE IDOL OF MILLIONS!
OH, NO! LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE!
MY CLOTHES! MY EXPENSIVE DIOR AND SAKS FIFTH AVENUE DRESSES! RUINED! LOOK AT THEM! -SOB-
AWWWW, I'M SORRY, SUE! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ACCIDENT AROUND HERE, YOU BIG APE! LEMME OUT OF HERE!
DON'T, SUE! I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU, HONEY!
YOU CAN'T, REED! THEY WERE ALL ORIGINAL, EXCLUSIVE CREATIONS! -SOB- MEN! YOU'RE ALL BEASTS!

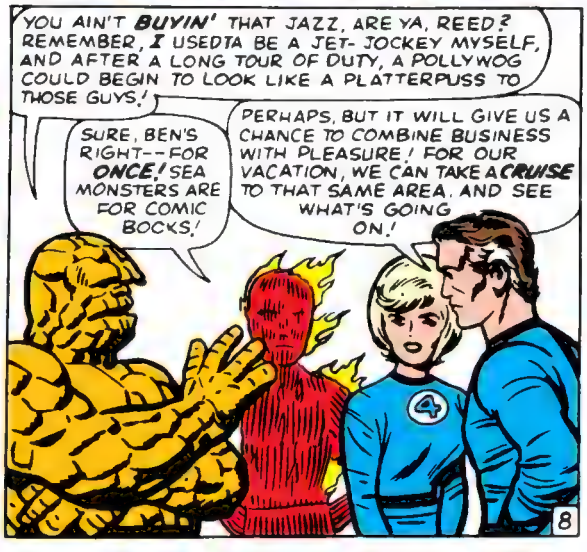
FORGIVE ME, BOYS! IT--IT ISN'T LIKE ME TO GET SO EMOTIONAL!
FORGET IT, SUE! WE ALL SEEM TO BE KEYED-UP, TENSE-- I THINK WE'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD! WE NEED A VACATION!


HEAR THAT, TORCHY-BOY?? A VACATION!! HOW ABOUT THAT!
LOOK OUT, YOU CLUMSY LUMMOX! OWWW!

BE SERIOUS, JOHNNY! I THINK A VACATION FOR US IS A WONDERFUL IDEA!
SOME VACATION, IF THE THING COMES ALONG! BUT OKAY, I'M FOR IT!
BUT WHERE'LL WE GO? I'M NO GOL-DARNED SIGHT-SEER! I WANT A SPOT THAT SWINGS!
I THINK I HAVE THE ANSWER, KIDS!

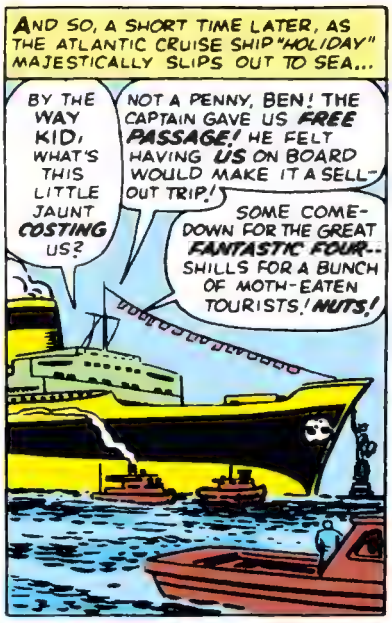

RECENTLY ONE OF OUR NEW EXPERIMENTAL ATOMIC SUBS REPORTED THE PRESENCE OF A STRANGE SEA MONSTER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ATLANTIC! THAT SIGHTING WAS CONFIRMED BY OTHER SUB COMMANDERS AS WELL!

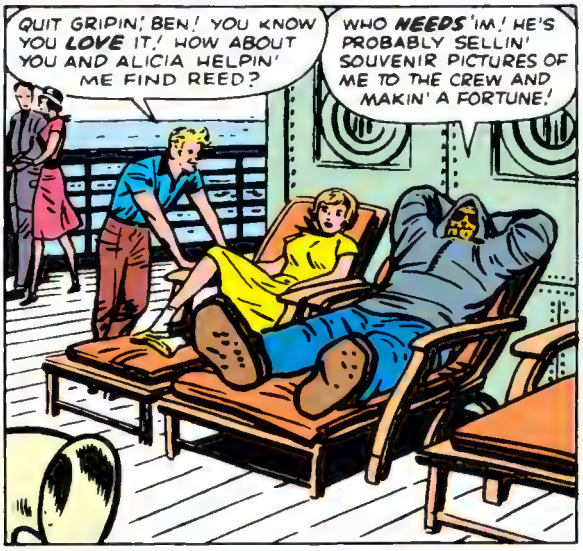

"AT THE SAME TIME, A COMMERCIAL JET, ON A NEW YORK TO LONDON FLIGHT, REPORTED THE PRESENCE OF GIGANTIC, INCREDIBLE FISH COMING TO THE SURFACE IN THAT SAME AREA!"

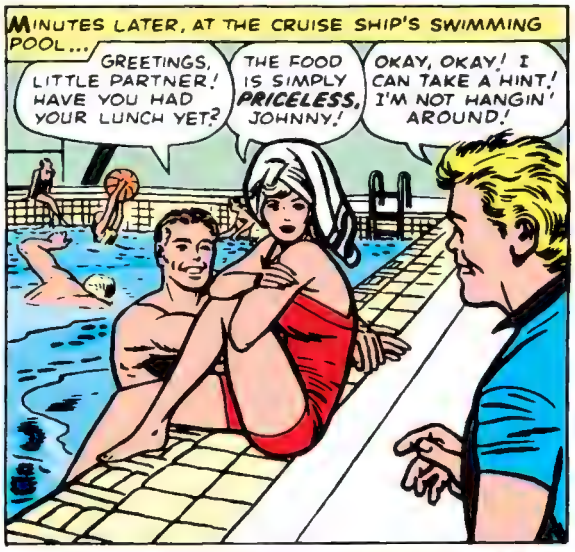

YOU AIN'T BUYIN' THAT JAZZ, ARE YA, REED? REMEMBER, I USEDTA BE A JET- JOCKEY MYSELF, AND AFTER A LONG TOUR OF DUTY, A POLLYWOG COULD BEGIN TO LOOK LIKE A PLATTERPUSS TO THOSE GUYS!
SURE, BEN'S RIGHT--FOR ONCE! SEA MONSTERS ARE FOR COMIC BOOKS!
PERHAPS, BUT IT WILL GIVE US A CHANCE TO COMBINE BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE! FOR OUR VACATION, WE CAN TAKE A CRUISE TO THAT SAME AREA, AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON!

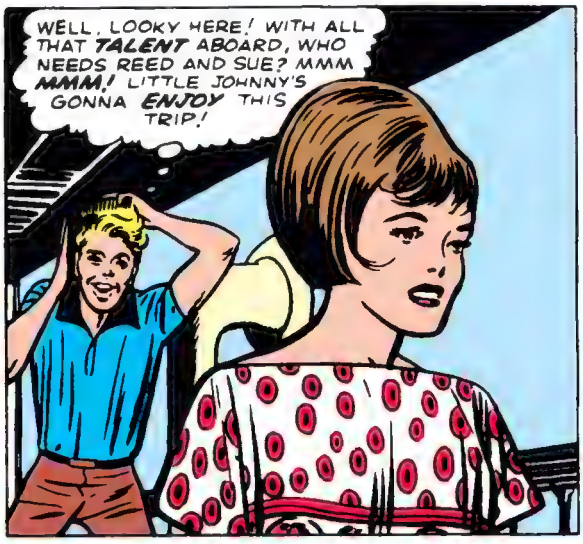
I THINK REED'S IDEA IS FABULOUS! PROVIDED YOU TAKE ME WITH YOU, THAT IS!
ALICIA, BABY! I DIDN'T HEAR YA COME IN! WOW, ARE YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!

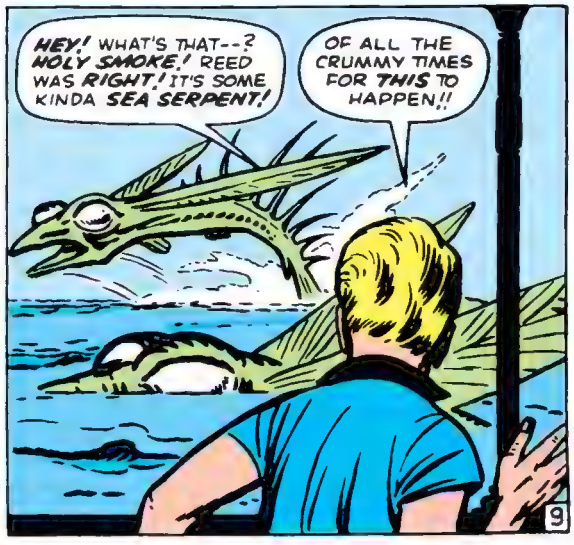
THEN, YOU WILL TAKE ME ALONG, BEN DEAR!
BABY, NOW THAT I FOUND YOU, I WOULDN'T LET YOU OUTTA MY SIGHT FOR NOTHIN'!
THEN IT'S AGREED? I'LL GET THE TICKETS TOMORROW!

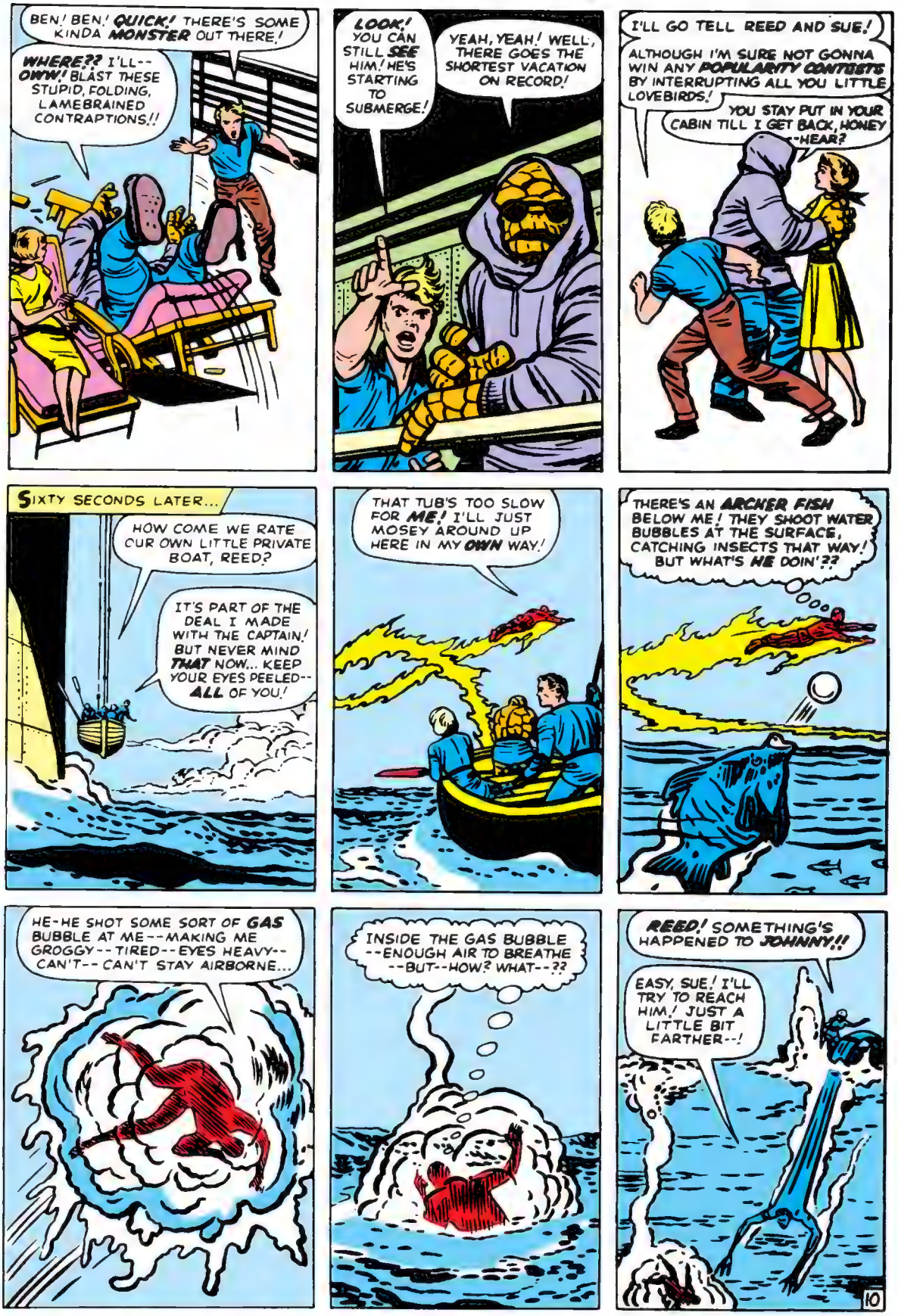

AND SO, A SHORT TIME LATER, AS THE ATLANTIC CRUISE SHIP "HOLIDAY" MAJESTICALLY SLIPS OUT TO SEA...
BY THE WAY KID, WHAT'S THIS LITTLE JAUNT COSTING US?
NOT A PENNY, BEN! THE CAPTAIN GAVE US FREE PASSAGE! HE FELT HAVING US ON BOARD WOULD MAKE IT A SELL-OUT TRIP!
SOME COME-DOWN FOR THE GREAT FANTASTIC FOUR--SHILLS FOR A BUNCH OF MOTH-EATEN TOURISTS! NUTS!

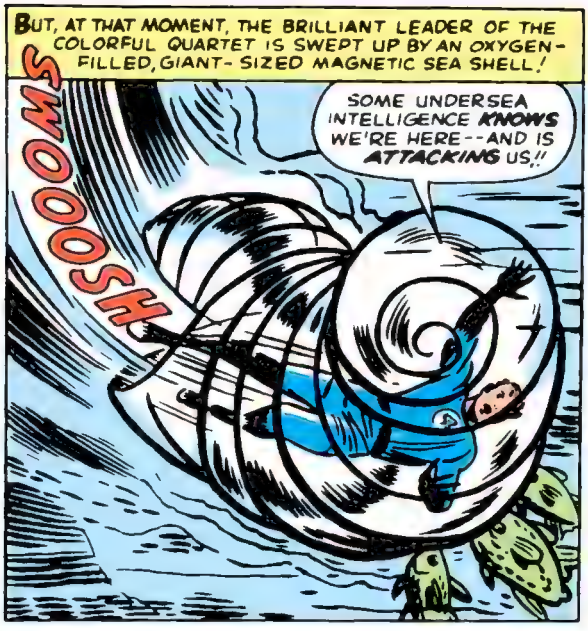

QUIT GRIPIN', BEN! YOU KNOW YOU LOVE IT! HOW ABOUT YOU AND ALICIA HELPIN' ME FIND REED?
WHO NEEDS 'IM! HE'S PROBABLY SELLIN' SOUVENIR PICTURES OF ME TO THE CREW AND MAKIN' A FORTUNE!

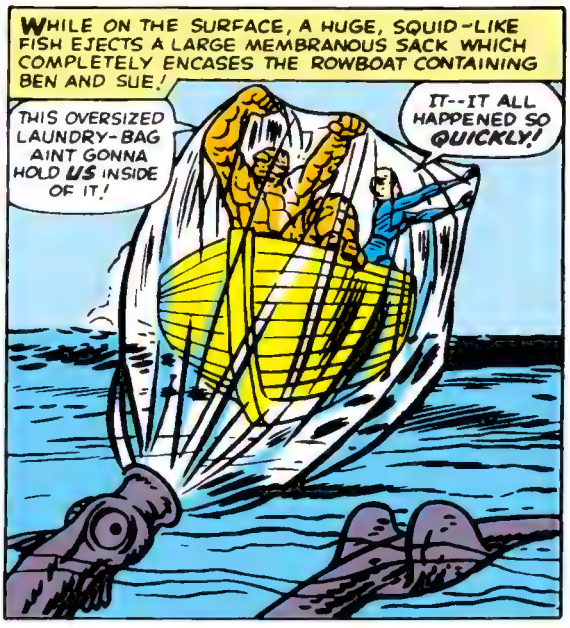

MINUTES LATER, AT THE CRUISE SHIP'S SWIMMING POOL...
GREETINGS, LITTLE PARTNER! HAVE YOU HAD YOUR LUNCH YET?
THE FOOD IS SIMPLY PRICELESS, JOHNNY!
OKAY, OKAY! I CAN TAKE A HINT! I'M NOT HANGIN' AROUND!

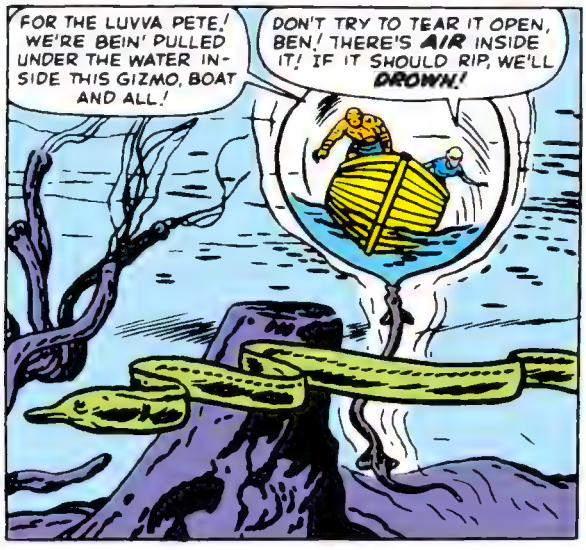

WELL, LOOKY HERE! WITH ALL THAT TALENT ABOARD, WHO NEEDS REED AND SUE? MMM MMM! LITTLE JOHNNY'S GONNA ENJOY THIS TRIP!

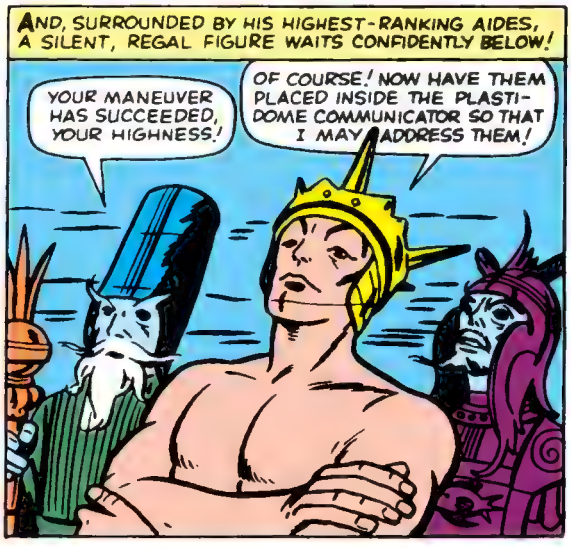

HEY! WHAT'S THAT--? HOLY SMOKE! REED WAS RIGHT! IT'S SOME KINDA SEA SERPENT!
OF ALL THE CRUMMY TIMES FOR THIS TO HAPPEN!!

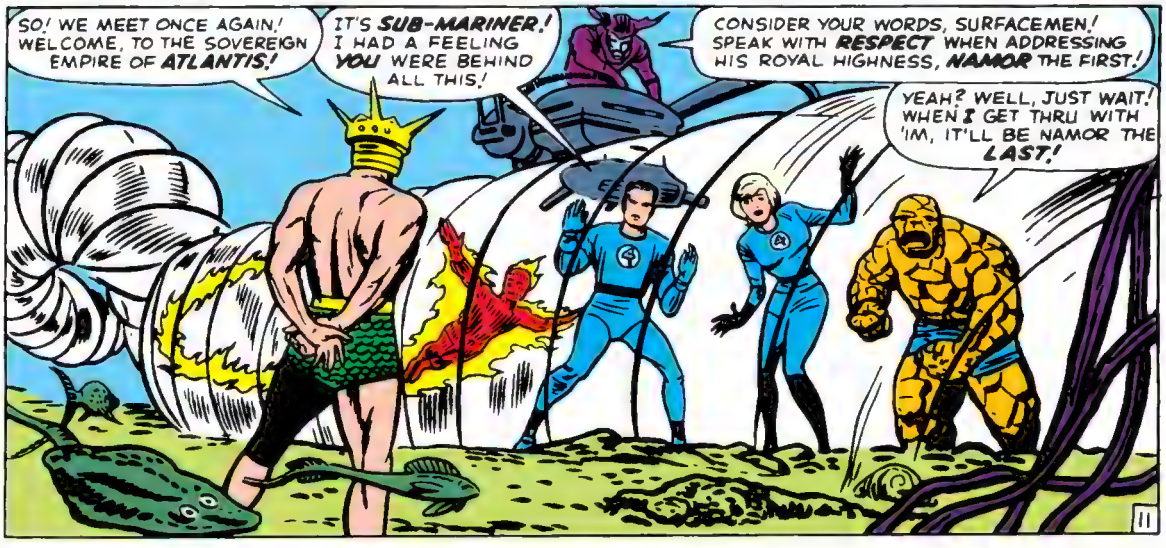

BEN! BEN! QUICK! THERE'S SOME KINDA MONSTER OUT THERE!
WHERE?? I'LL-- OWW! BLAST THESE STUPID, FOLDING, LAMEBRAINED CONTRAPTIONS!!
LOOK! YOU CAN STILL SEE HIM! HE'S STARTING TO SUBMERGE!
YEAH, YEAH! WELL, THERE GOES THE SHORTEST VACATION ON RECORD!
I'LL GO TELL REED AND SUE!
ALTHOUGH I'M SURE NOT GONNA WIN ANY POPULARITY CONTESTS BY INTERRUPTING ALL YOU LITTLE LOVEBIRDS!
YOU STAY PUT IN YOUR CABIN TILL I GET BACK, HONEY --HEAR?
SIXTY SECONDS LATER...
HOW COME WE RATE OUR OWN LITTLE PRIVATE BOAT, REED?
IT'S PART OF THE DEAL I MADE WITH THE CAPTAIN! BUT NEVER MIND THAT NOW... KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED-- ALL OF YOU!
THAT TUB'S TOO SLOW FOR ME! I'LL JUST MOSEY AROUND UP HERE IN MY OWN WAY!
THERE'S AN ARCHER FISH BELOW ME! THEY SHOOT WATER BUBBLES AT THE SURFACE, CATCHING INSECTS THAT WAY! BUT WHAT'S HE DOIN'??
HE-HE SHOT SOME SORT OF GAS BUBBLE AT ME--MAKING ME GROGGY--TIRED--EYES HEAVY-- CAN'T--CAN'T STAY AIRBORNE...
INSIDE THE GAS BUBBLE --ENOUGH AIR TO BREATHE --BUT--HOW? WHAT--??
REED! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO JOHNNY!!
EASY, SUE! I'LL TRY TO REACH HIM! JUST A LITTLE BIT FARTHER--!
10

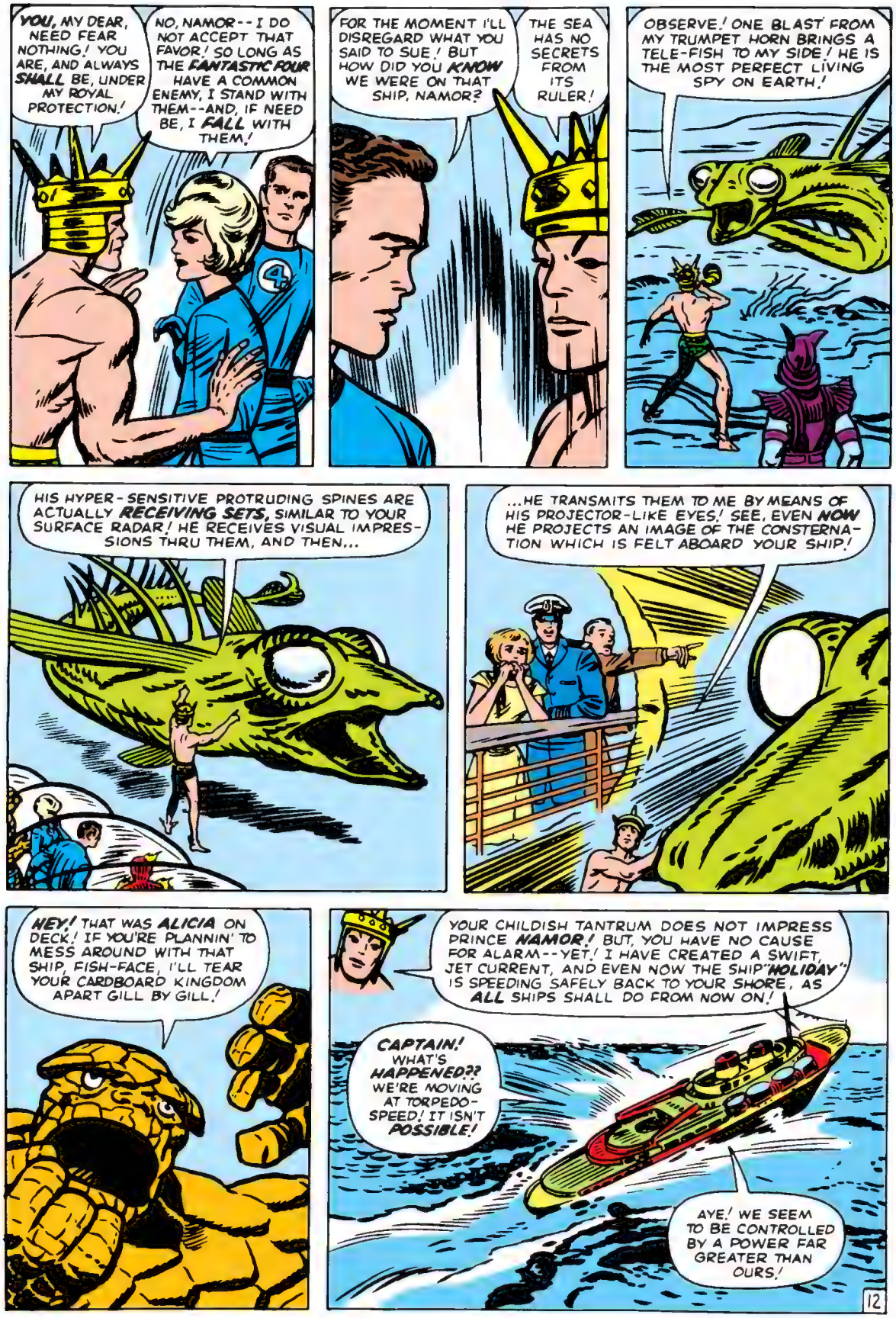

BUT, AT THAT MOMENT, THE BRILLIANT LEADER OF THE COLORFUL QUARTET IS SWEPT UP BY AN OXYGEN-FILLED, GIANT-SIZED MAGNETIC SEA SHELL!
SWOOOSH
SOME UNDERSEA INTELLIGENCE KNOWS WE'RE HERE--AND IS ATTACKING US!!


WHILE ON THE SURFACE, A HUGE, SQUID-LIKE FISH EJECTS A LARGE MEMBRANOUS SACK WHICH COMPLETELY ENCASES THE ROWBOAT CONTAINING BEN AND SUE!
THIS OVERSIZED LAUNDRY-BAG AINT GONNA HOLD US INSIDE OF IT!
IT--IT ALL HAPPENED SO QUICKLY!


FOR THE LUVVA PETE! WE'RE BEIN' PULLED UNDER THE WATER INSIDE THIS GIZMO, BOAT AND ALL!
DON'T TRY TO TEAR IT OPEN, BEN! THERE'S AIR INSIDE IT! IF IT SHOULD RIP, WE'LL DROWN!


AND, SURROUNDED BY HIS HIGHEST-RANKING AIDES, A SILENT, REGAL FIGURE WAITS CONFIDENTLY BELOW!
YOUR MANEUVER HAS SUCCEEDED, YOUR HIGHNESS!
OF COURSE! NOW HAVE THEM PLACED INSIDE THE PLASTI-DOME COMMUNICATOR SO THAT I MAY ADDRESS THEM!


SO! WE MEET ONCE AGAIN! WELCOME, TO THE SOVEREIGN EMPIRE OF ATLANTIS!
IT'S SUB-MARINER! I HAD A FEELING YOU WERE BEHIND ALL THIS!
CONSIDER YOUR WORDS, SURFACEMEN! SPEAK WITH RESPECT WHEN ADDRESSING HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, NAMOR THE FIRST!
YEAH? WELL, JUST WAIT! WHEN I GET THRU WITH 'IM, IT'LL BE NAMOR THE LAST!


YOU, MY DEAR, NEED FEAR NOTHING! YOU ARE, AND ALWAYS SHALL BE, UNDER MY ROYAL PROTECTION!
NO, NAMOR--I DO NOT ACCEPT THAT FAVOR! SO LONG AS THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE A COMMON ENEMY, I STAND WITH THEM--AND, IF NEED BE, I FALL WITH THEM!
FOR THE MOMENT I'LL DISREGARD WHAT YOU SAID TO SUE! BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE ON THAT SHIP, NAMOR?
THE SEA HAS NO SECRETS FROM ITS RULER!
OBSERVE! ONE BLAST FROM MY TRUMPET HORN BRINGS A TELE-FISH TO MY SIDE! HE IS THE MOST PERFECT LIVING SPY ON EARTH!
HIS HYPER-SENSITIVE PROTRUDING SPINES ARE ACTUALLY RECEIVING SETS, SIMILAR TO YOUR SURFACE RADAR! HE RECEIVES VISUAL IMPRESSIONS THRU THEM, AND THEN...
...HE TRANSMITS THEM TO ME BY MEANS OF HIS PROJECTOR-LIKE EYES! SEE, EVEN NOW HE PROJECTS AN IMAGE OF THE CONSTERNATION WHICH IS FELT ABOARD YOUR SHIP!
HEY! THAT WAS ALICIA ON DECK! IF YOU'RE PLANNIN' TO MESS AROUND WITH THAT SHIP, FISH-FACE, I'LL TEAR YOUR CARDBOARD KINGDOM APART GILL BY GILL!
YOUR CHILDISH TANTRUM DOES NOT IMPRESS PRINCE NAMOR! BUT, YOU HAVE NO CAUSE FOR ALARM--YET! I HAVE CREATED A SWIFT, JET CURRENT, AND EVEN NOW THE SHIP "HOLIDAY" IS SPEEDING SAFELY BACK TO YOUR SHORE, AS ALL SHIPS SHALL DO FROM NOW ON!
CAPTAIN! WHAT'S HAPPENED?? WE'RE MOVING AT TORPEDO-SPEED! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!
AYE! WE SEEM TO BE CONTROLLED BY A POWER FAR GREATER THAN OURS!
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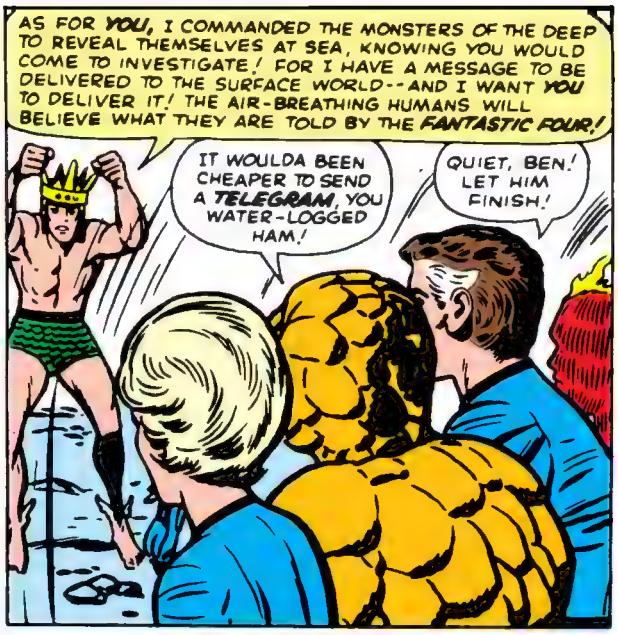
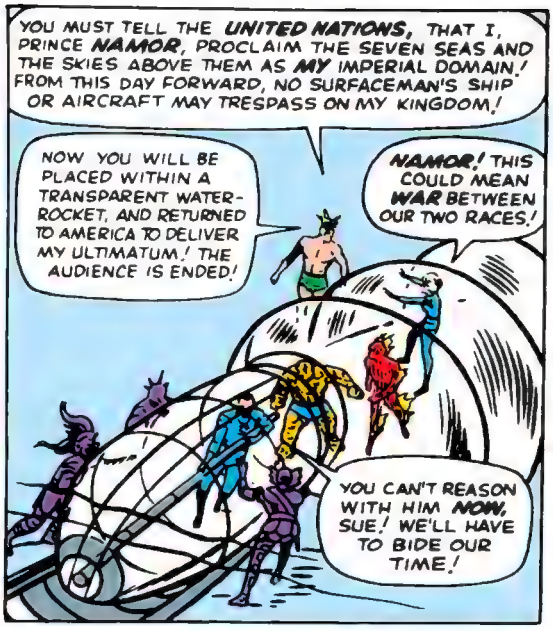
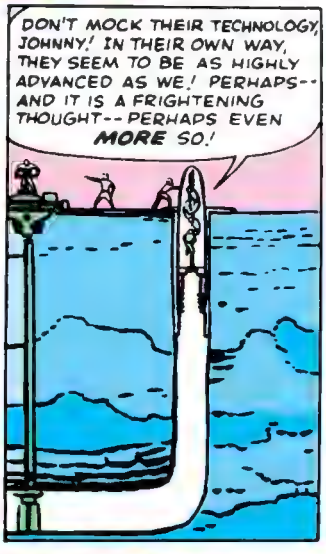
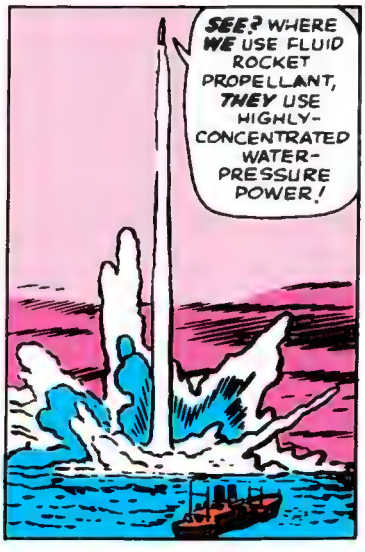
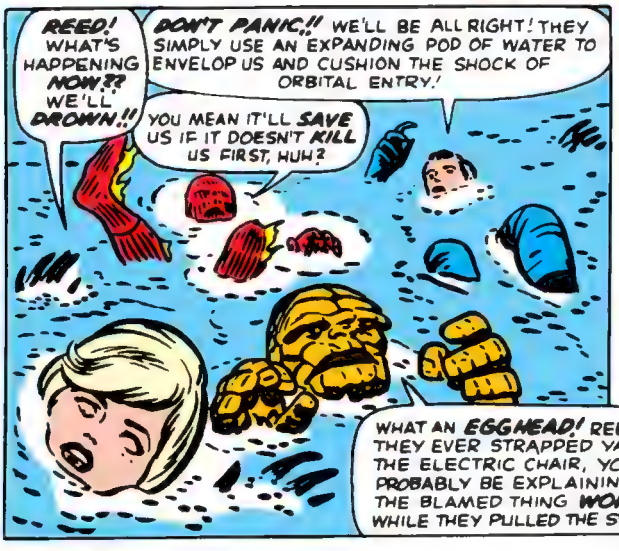

AS FOR YOU, I COMMANDED THE MONSTERS OF THE DEEP TO REVEAL THEMSELVES AT SEA, KNOWING YOU WOULD COME TO INVESTIGATE! FOR I HAVE A MESSAGE TO BE DELIVERED TO THE SURFACE WORLD--AND I WANT YOU TO DELIVER IT! THE AIR-BREATHING HUMANS WILL BELIEVE WHAT THEY ARE TOLD BY THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
IT WOULDA BEEN CHEAPER TO SEND A TELEGRAM, YOU WATER-LOGGED HAM!
QUIET, BEN! LET HIM FINISH!

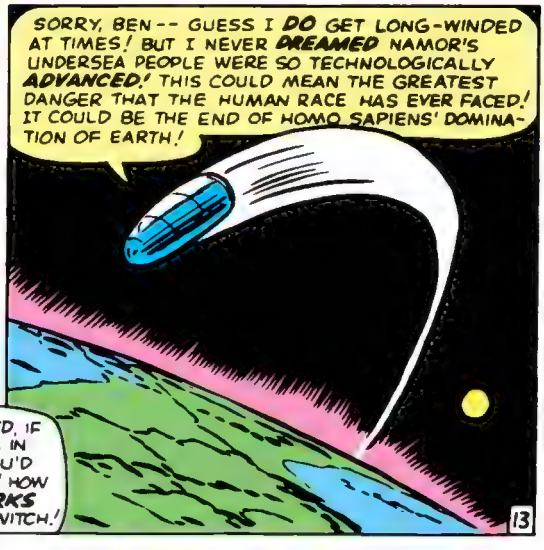

YOU MUST TELL THE UNITED NATIONS, THAT I, PRINCE NAMOR, PROCLAIM THE SEVEN SEAS AND THE SKIES ABOVE THEM AS MY IMPERIAL DOMAIN! FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, NO SURFACEMAN'S SHIP OR AIRCRAFT MAY TRESPASS ON MY KINGDOM!
NOW YOU WILL BE PLACED WITHIN A TRANSPARENT WATER-ROCKET, AND RETURNED TO AMERICA TO DELIVER MY ULTIMATUM! THE AUDIENCE IS ENDED!
NAMOR! THIS COULD MEAN WAR BETWEEN OUR TWO RACES!
YOU CAN'T REASON WITH HIM NOW, SUE! WE'LL HAVE TO BIDE OUR TIME!

I'D LIKE TO REASON WITH 'IM --WITH A BRICK!
HOLD ON TO THIS CENTER ROD, ALL OF YOU! THEY'RE FORCING TONS OF WATER PRESSURE UNDER THIS CYLINDER, TO MAKE IT RISE!
HEY! WHAT IS THIS BLAMED THINGAMAJIG??
I FEEL LIKE SOME KINDA NUT INSIDE HERE!


DON'T MOCK THEIR TECHNOLOGY, JOHNNY! IN THEIR OWN WAY, THEY SEEM TO BE AS HIGHLY ADVANCED AS WE! PERHAPS--AND IT IS A FRIGHTENING THOUGHT--PERHAPS EVEN MORE SO!


SEE? WHERE WE USE FLUID ROCKET PROPELLANT, THEY USE HIGHLY-CONCENTRATED WATER-PRESSURE POWER!


REED! WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?? WE'LL DROWN!!
DON'T PANIC,!! WE'LL BE ALL RIGHT! THEY SIMPLY USE AN EXPANDING POD OF WATER TO ENVELOP US AND CUSHION THE SHOCK OF ORBITAL ENTRY!
YOU MEAN IT'LL SAVE US IF IT DOESN'T KILL US FIRST, HUH?
WHAT AN EGGHEAD! REED, IF THEY EVER STRAPPED YA IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR, YOU'D PROBABLY BE EXPLAININ' HOW THE BLAMED THING WORKS WHILE THEY PULLED THE SWITCH!


SORRY, BEN -- GUESS I DO GET LONG-WINDED AT TIMES! BUT I NEVER DREAMED NAMOR'S UNDERSEA PEOPLE WERE SO TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED! THIS COULD MEAN THE GREATEST DANGER THAT THE HUMAN RACE HAS EVER FACED! IT COULD BE THE END OF HOMO SAPIENS' DOMINATION OF EARTH!

FINALLY, AFTER LONG MINUTES OF SUB-ORBITAL FLIGHT, A THIN MEMBRANOUS OUTER SKIN OPENS ATOP THE STRANGE MISSILE, ACTING AS A COMBINATION BRAKE AND PARACHUTE!
WE'RE SLOWIN' DOWN--FALLIN'! LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE LINE!
THE LIFE-AND-DEATH QUESTION FACING US NOW IS: HOW ACCURATE IS THIS CAPSULE'S GUIDANCE SYSTEM??

SECONDS LATER THEY GET THEIR ASTONISHING ANSWER...
HOLY COW! IT LANDED RIGHT ATOP OUR HEADQUARTERS!!
IT'S MORE ACCURATE THAN ANY GUIDED MISSILE KNOWN TO MAN!

LOOK! AFTER CUSHIONING THE SHOCK AND LANDING US GENTLY, IT'S FALLING APART--IT'S EVAPORATING!
THAT MUST BE SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STUDY IT AND SEE HOW IT WORKS!
ANYWAY IT SAVES US THE TROUBLE OF SWEEPIN' THE BLAMED THING UP!

BESIDES, REED CAN PROBABLY BUILD ONE TWICE AS GOOD BY NOW, AFTER LOOKIN' AT IT ONCE--RIGHT BIG BRAIN??
'FRAID NOT, BEN! NOT WITHOUT THE MATERIALS NAMOR HAS AT HIS COMMAND--WE WOULD HAVE TO FIND WAYS TO MANUFACTURE SUBSTANCES LIKE THIS ARTIFICIALLY!

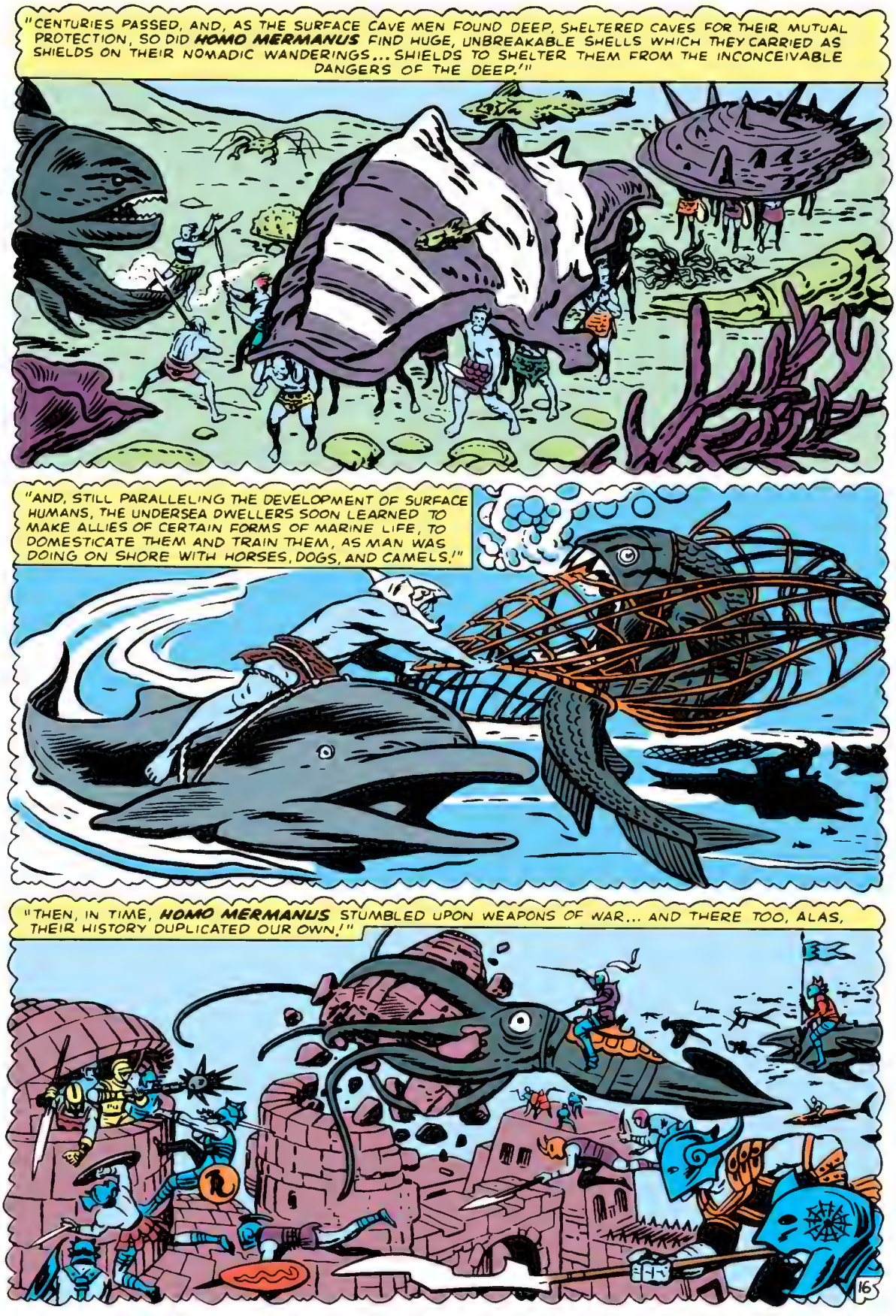
HEY! I JUST REMEMBERED! ALICIA! SHE WAS ON THE "HOLIDAY"! WHERE IS SHE? WHAT HAPPENED TO HER??!
I WOULDN'T WORRY, BEN! AT THE SPEED THEY WERE GOING, SHE SHOULD BE REACHING THE PIER WITHIN THE NEXT HOUR! BETTER MEET HER THERE, OLD FRIEND!

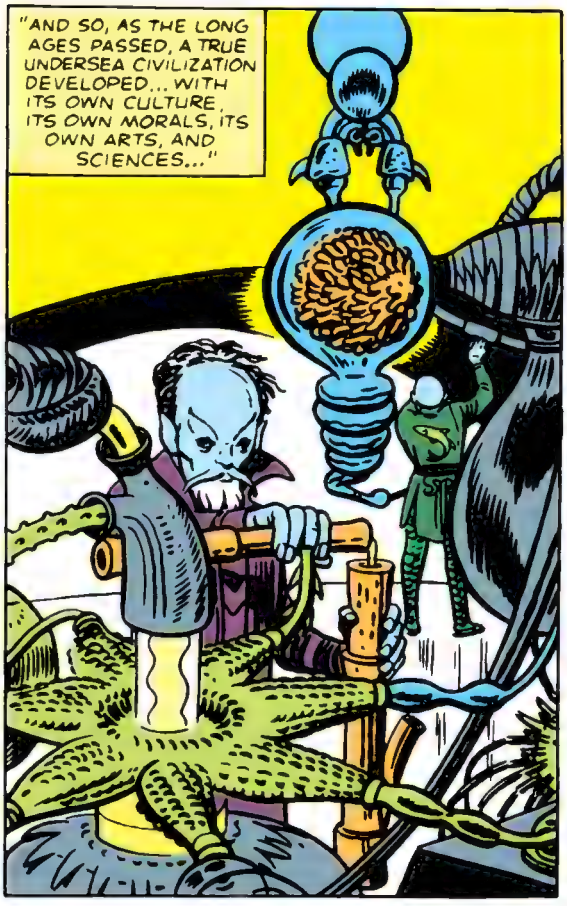
SUE HASN'T SAID A WORD SINCE WE LANDED! SHE MUST BE HAUNTED BY THOUGHTS OF NAMOR! NAMOR--AM I TO HAVE HIS IMAGE ALWAYS BETWEEN ME AND THE GIRL I LOVE??
WHY?? WHY MUST NAMOR BE OUR ENEMY?? WHERE WILL IT ALL END?
I'M CUTTIN' OUT OF THE GLOOM ROOM AND HEADIN FOR A SNOOZE!

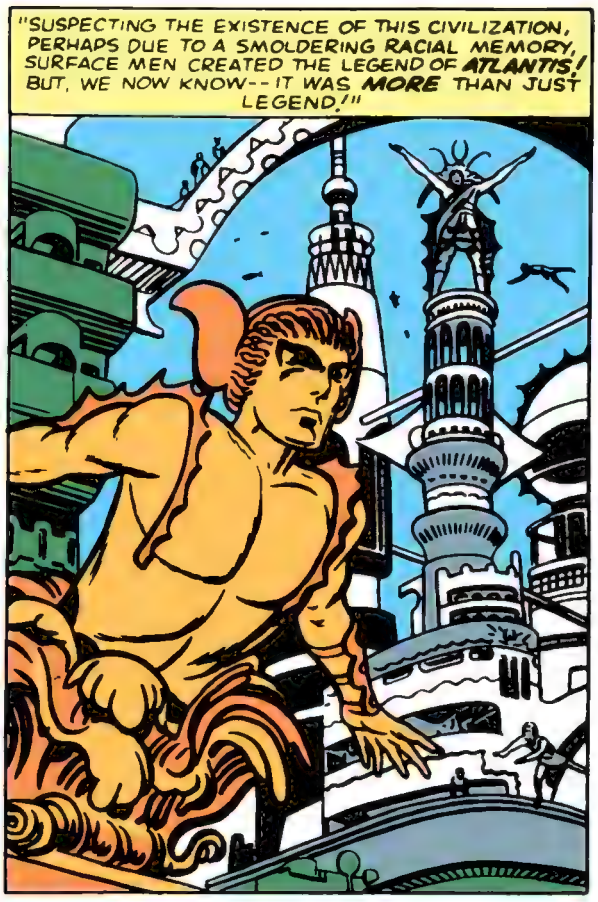
WELL. NO TIME TO DWELL UPON MY PERSONAL PROBLEMS! I STILL HAVE A JOB TO DO!
HELLO INFORMATION? I'D LIKE THE NUMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS... I WANT TO SPEAK TO...

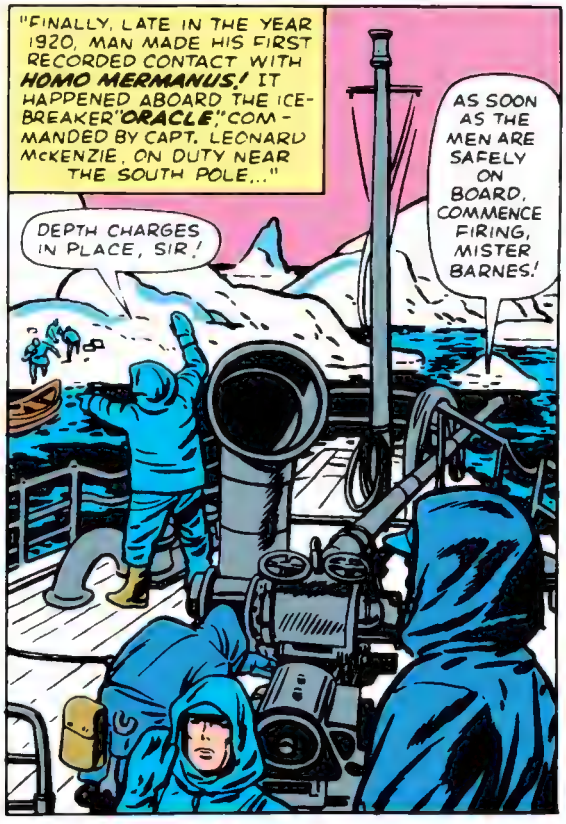
AND, A FEW SECONDS LATER...
YES...OF COURSE I UNDERSTAND, RICHARDS! I'LL ARRANGE AN EMERGENCY SESSION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

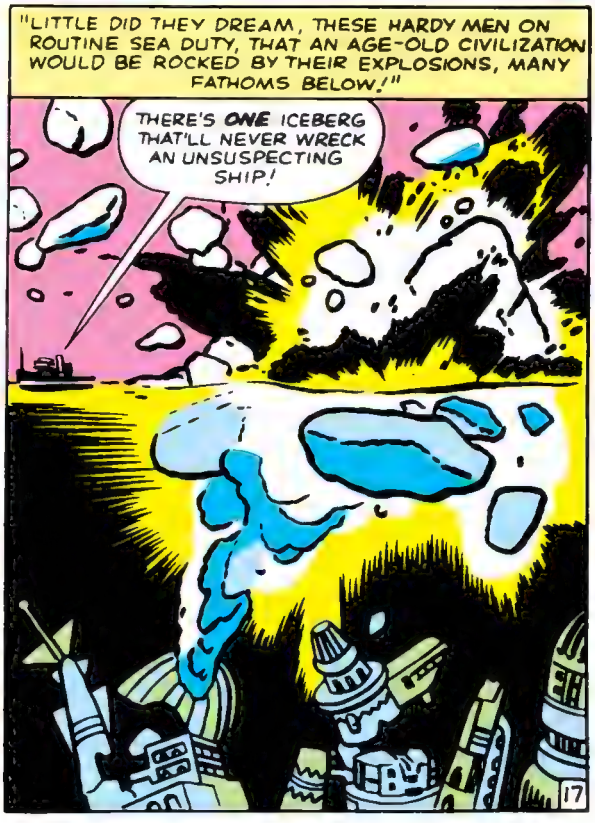
AND SO, THE ULTIMATUM OF NAMOR THE FIRST, PRINCE OF ATLANTIS, IS RELAYED TO STARTLED EMISSARIES OF EARTH'S SURFACE NATIONS!
...AND I CANNOT EMPHASIZE TOO STRONGLY THE GRAVITY OF THE THREAT! THIS IS NO BLUSTERING TYRANT TRYING TO BLUFF THE U.N.! THIS IS THE SUPREME RULER OF A POWERFUL UNDERSEA EMPIRE, WHO FEELS HE IS FIGHTING FOR WHAT IS DUE HIM! AND THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY THAT HE HAS THE ARMED MIGHT TO ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVES!
BAH! IT IS ALL A PACK OF CAPITALISTIC LIES!
NO MATTER WHAT THE DEMOCRACIES SAY, I VOTE NYET! NYET! NYET!
BAM BAM
WE ANTICIPATED THE FACT THAT SOME MEMBER NATIONS MIGHT DOUBT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SUB-MARINER, AND SO I PRESENT DR. G.W. FALTON, AN EMINENT AUTHORITY ON UNDERSEA LIFE, WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED TO EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN OF NAMOR AND HIS ALMOST LEGENDARY RACE!
IF THE DELEGATE WILL KINDLY STOP POUNDING HIS SHOE, I WILL TRY TO ALLAY HIS UNFOUNDED SUSPICIONS!
I CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS RARE SKULL FOSSIL EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF A RACE KNOWN AS HOMO MERMANUS, OR MAN OF THE SEA!
AT THE DAWN OF TIME, MANY FORMS OF LIFE EVOLVED FROM THE SEA ...AND SOME OF THEM LATER RETURNED TO THE SEA, SUCH AS THE MAMMAL WE CALL WHALE!
"BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER FORM OF MAMMAL WHICH LATER RETURNED TO THE SEA -- THE MAMMAL WHICH WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS HOMO MERMANUS! WE SHALL NEVER KNOW WHAT AWESOME MENACE DROVE HIM BACK TO THE DEEP, BUT OF ONE THING WE CAN BE CERTAIN..."
"...HOMO MERMANUS EVOLVED INTO AN INTELLIGENT, WATER-BREATHING RACE...RIVALING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR OWN EARLY CAVE MEN!"
ARTIST'S INTERPRETATION OF ANCIENT SEA PEOPLE BATTLING THE ACTUAL ANCESTOR OF OUR PRESENT DAY SHARK.
15


"CENTURIES PASSED, AND, AS THE SURFACE CAVE MEN FOUND DEEP, SHELTERED CAVES FOR THEIR MUTUAL PROTECTION, SO DID HOMO MERMANUS FIND HUGE, UNBREAKABLE SHELLS WHICH THEY CARRIED AS SHIELDS ON THEIR NOMADIC WANDERINGS... SHIELDS TO SHELTER THEM FROM THE INCONCEIVABLE DANGERS OF THE DEEP.'"
"AND, STILL PARALLELING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SURFACE HUMANS, THE UNDERSEA DWELLERS SOON LEARNED TO MAKE ALLIES OF CERTAIN FORMS OF MARINE LIFE, TO DOMESTICATE THEM AND TRAIN THEM, AS MAN WAS DOING ON SHORE WITH HORSES, DOGS, AND CAMELS.'"
"THEN, IN TIME, HOMO MERMANUS STUMBLED UPON WEAPONS OF WAR... AND THERE TOO, ALAS, THEIR HISTORY DUPLICATED OUR OWN.'"

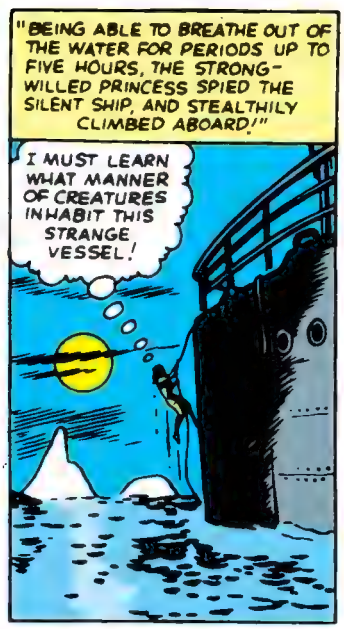

"AND SO, AS THE LONG AGES PASSED, A TRUE UNDERSEA CIVILIZATION DEVELOPED... WITH ITS OWN CULTURE, ITS OWN MORALS, ITS OWN ARTS, AND SCIENCES..."

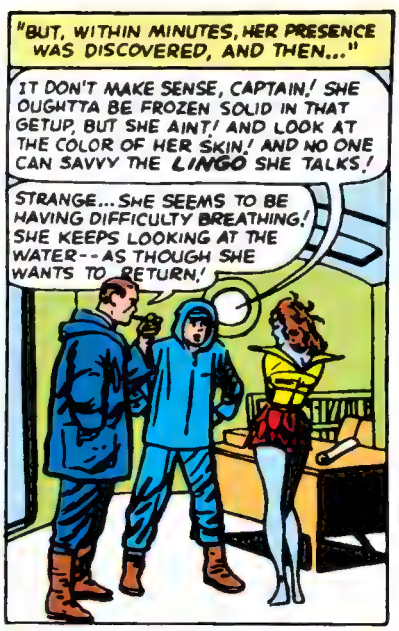

"SUSPECTING THE EXISTENCE OF THIS CIVILIZATION, PERHAPS DUE TO A SMOLDERING RACIAL MEMORY, SURFACE MEN CREATED THE LEGEND OF ATLANTIS! BUT, WE NOW KNOW--IT WAS MORE THAN JUST LEGEND!"

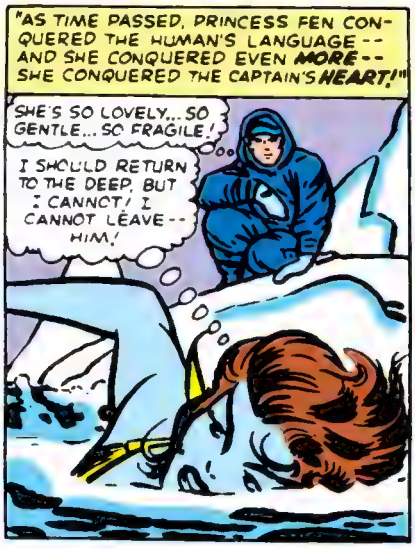

"FINALLY, LATE IN THE YEAR 1920, MAN MADE HIS FIRST RECORDED CONTACT WITH HOMO MERMANUS! IT HAPPENED ABOARD THE ICE-BREAKER "ORACLE," COMMANDED BY CAPT. LEONARD McKENZIE, ON DUTY NEAR THE SOUTH POLE..."
DEPTH CHARGES IN PLACE, SIR!
AS SOON AS THE MEN ARE SAFELY ON BOARD, COMMENCE FIRING, MISTER BARNES!


"LITTLE DID THEY DREAM, THESE HARDY MEN ON ROUTINE SEA DUTY, THAT AN AGE-OLD CIVILIZATION WOULD BE ROCKED BY THEIR EXPLOSIONS, MANY FATHOMS BELOW!"
THERE'S ONE ICEBERG THAT'LL NEVER WRECK AN UNSUSPECTING SHIP!

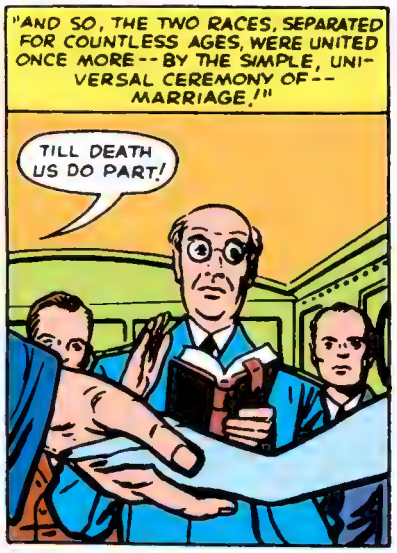
"PUZZLED BY THE SEVERITY OF THE BLAST, THE KING SENT FOR HIS DAUGHTER, PRINCESS FEN...."
MY DEAR, I WISH YOU TO SEND A SCOUTING EXPEDITION TO INVESTIGATE THAT STRANGE EXPLOSION!
AS YOU COMMAND, MY FATHER!
THERE IS NO NEED FOR A SCOUTING PARTY! FOR SUCH A SIMPLE MISSION, I, MYSELF, SHALL MAKE THE ASCENT!

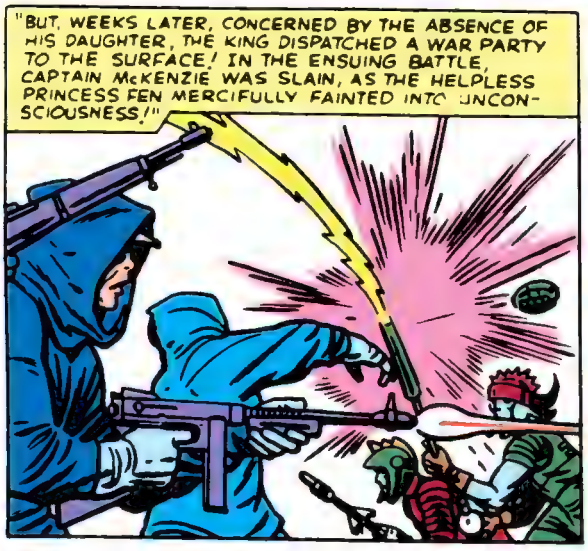

"BEING ABLE TO BREATHE OUT OF THE WATER FOR PERIODS UP TO FIVE HOURS, THE STRONG-WILLED PRINCESS SPIED THE SILENT SHIP, AND STEALTHILY CLIMBED ABOARD!"
I MUST LEARN WHAT MANNER OF CREATURES INHABIT THIS STRANGE VESSEL!

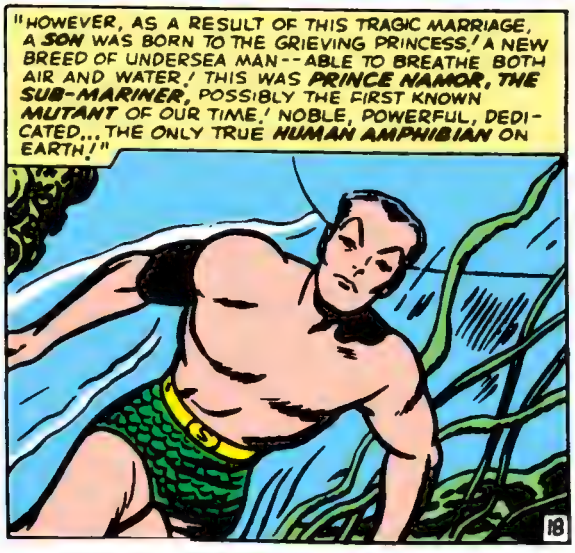

"BUT, WITHIN MINUTES, HER PRESENCE WAS DISCOVERED, AND THEN..."
IT DON'T MAKE SENSE, CAPTAIN! SHE OUGHTTA BE FROZEN SOLID IN THAT GETUP, BUT SHE AIN'T! AND LOOK AT THE COLOR OF HER SKIN! AND NO ONE CAN SAVVY THE LINGO SHE TALKS!
STRANGE... SHE SEEMS TO BE HAVING DIFFICULTY BREATHING! SHE KEEPS LOOKING AT THE WATER--AS THOUGH SHE WANTS TO RETURN!


"AS TIME PASSED, PRINCESS FEN CONQUERED THE HUMAN'S LANGUAGE--AND SHE CONQUERED EVEN MORE--SHE CONQUERED THE CAPTAIN'S HEART!"
SHE'S SO LOVELY... SO GENTLE... SO FRAGILE!
I SHOULD RETURN TO THE DEEP, BUT I CANNOT! I CANNOT LEAVE--HIM!

FEN, MY LOVELY STRANGER--MY MYSTERIOUS ENCHANTRESS--I MUST ASK YOU--
I KNOW YOUR QUESTION, BELOVED--AND MY HEART ANSWERS "YES"!


"AND SO, THE TWO RACES, SEPARATED FOR COUNTLESS AGES, WERE UNITED ONCE MORE--BY THE SIMPLE, UNIVERSAL CEREMONY OF--MARRIAGE!"
TILL DEATH US DO PART!


"BUT, WEEKS LATER, CONCERNED BY THE ABSENCE OF HIS DAUGHTER, THE KING DISPATCHED A WAR PARTY TO THE SURFACE! IN THE ENSUING BATTLE, CAPTAIN McKENZIE WAS SLAIN, AS THE HELPLESS PRINCESS FEN MERCIFULLY FAINTED INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS!"

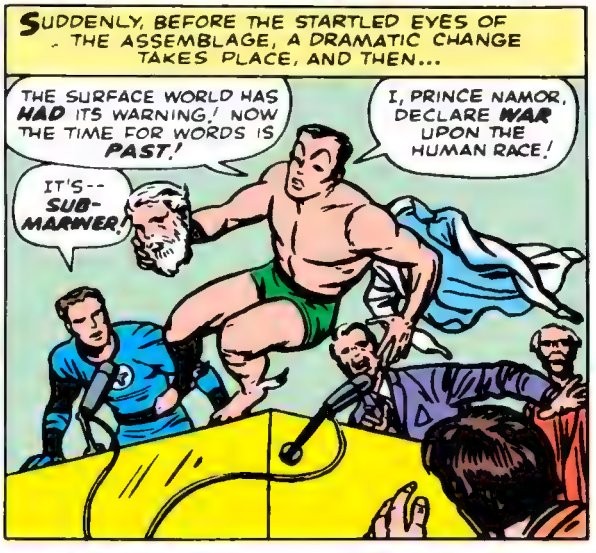

"HOWEVER, AS A RESULT OF THIS TRAGIC MARRIAGE, A SON WAS BORN TO THE GRIEVING PRINCESS! A NEW BREED OF UNDERSEA MAN--ABLE TO BREATHE BOTH AIR AND WATER! THIS WAS PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, POSSIBLY THE FIRST KNOWN MUTANT OF OUR TIME! NOBLE, POWERFUL, DEDICATED... THE ONLY TRUE HUMAN AMPHIBIAN ON EARTH!"

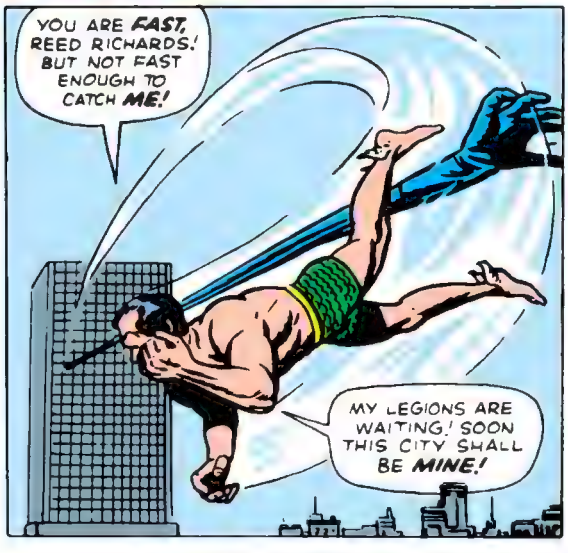
LOOK, DR. FALTON, LET'S CUT THIS SHORT! THE REST WE KNOW! PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, HAS BEEN MANKIND'S ENEMY EVER SINCE HIS UNDERSEA HOMELAND WAS ACCIDENTALLY DEVASTATED BY AN H-BOMB TEST AT SEA!

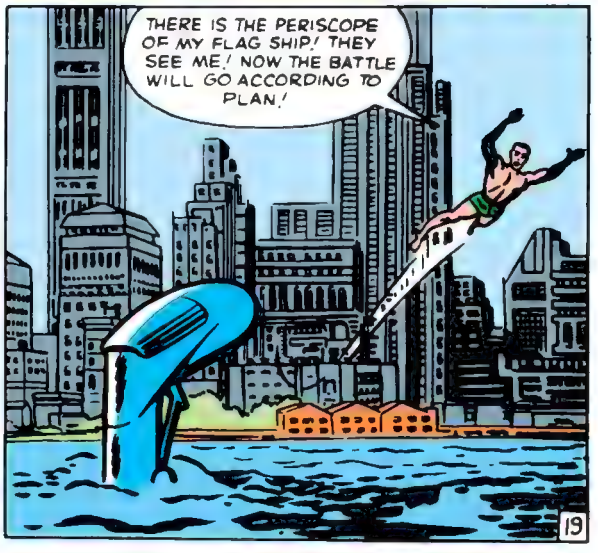
WE KNOW HOW NAMOR FIRST TRIED TO RAID COASTAL CITIES, SUMMONING STRANGE CREATURES FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA TO DO HIS BIDDING!

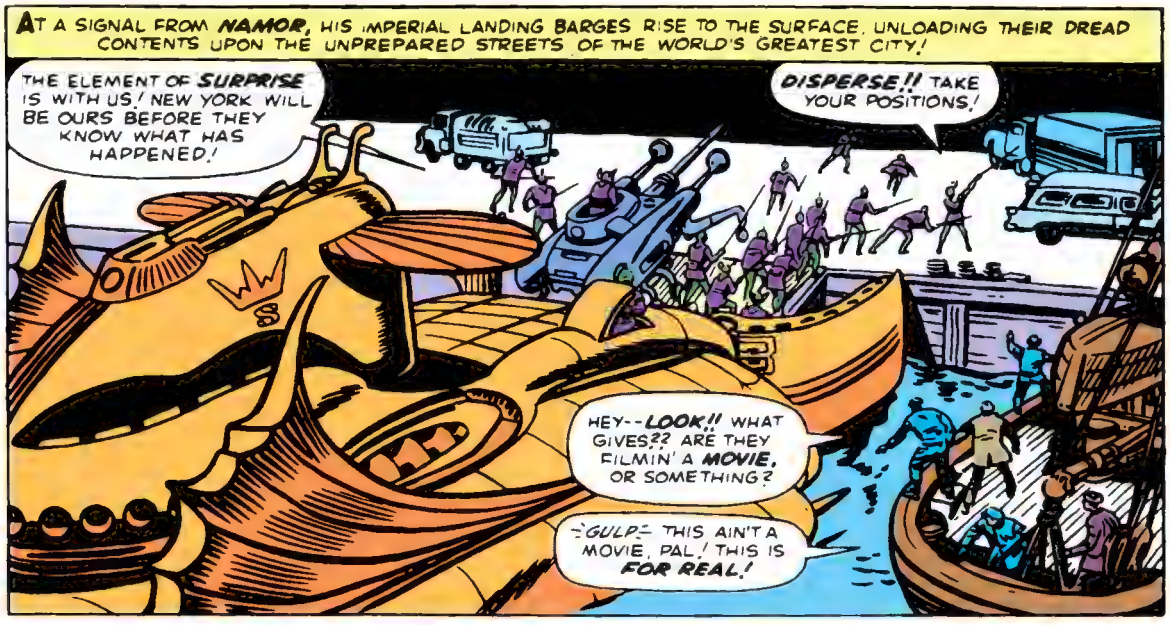
"YOU KNOW HOW THE FANTASTIC FOUR TRIED TO HELP HIM, REASON WITH HIM, BUT ALL TO NO AVAIL! WE FINALLY ENDED UP BATTLING HIM--BUT NEVER WITH A CLEAN-CUT DECISION..."

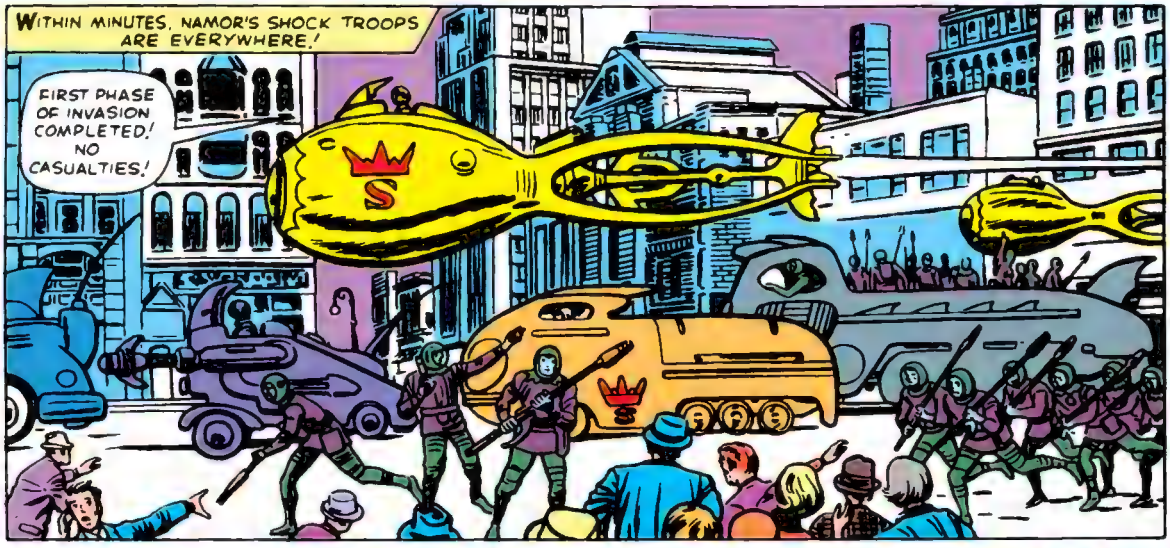
FOR MONTHS I HAVE WARNED THE WORLD OF NAMOR'S POWER--OF THE THREAT HE POSED TO MANKIND--BUT MY WORDS FELL UPON DEAF EARS! NOW WE ARE FACED WITH THAT THREAT, AND WE MUST BE STRONG, WE MUST BE RESOLUTE --WE MUST FIGHT HIM UNTIL HE CAN THREATEN US NO MORE!
SO THAT IS YOUR ANSWER!


SUDDENLY, BEFORE THE STARTLED EYES OF THE ASSEMBLAGE, A DRAMATIC CHANGE TAKES PLACE, AND THEN...
THE SURFACE WORLD HAS HAD ITS WARNING! NOW THE TIME FOR WORDS IS PAST!
I, PRINCE NAMOR, DECLARE WAR UPON THE HUMAN RACE!
IT'S--SUB-MARINER!


YOU ARE FAST, REED RICHARDS! BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH TO CATCH ME!
MY LEGIONS ARE WAITING! SOON THIS CITY SHALL BE MINE!


THERE IS THE PERISCOPE OF MY FLAG SHIP! THEY SEE ME! NOW THE BATTLE WILL GO ACCORDING TO PLAN!


AT A SIGNAL FROM NAMOR, HIS IMPERIAL LANDING BARGES RISE TO THE SURFACE, UNLOADING THEIR DREAD CONTENTS UPON THE UNPREPARED STREETS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST CITY!
THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE IS WITH US! NEW YORK WILL BE OURS BEFORE THEY KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED!
DISPERSE!! TAKE YOUR POSITIONS!
HEY--LOOK!! WHAT GIVES?? ARE THEY FILMIN' A MOVIE, OR SOMETHING?
=GULP= THIS AIN'T A MOVIE, PAL! THIS IS FOR REAL!

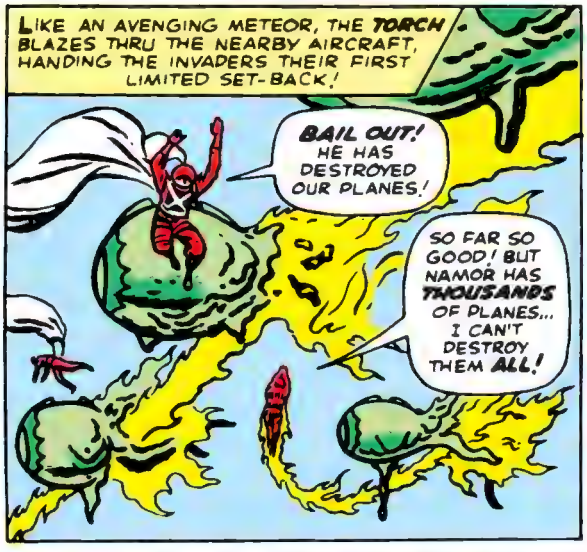

WITHIN MINUTES, NAMOR'S SHOCK TROOPS ARE EVERYWHERE!
FIRST PHASE OF INVASION COMPLETED! NO CASUALTIES!

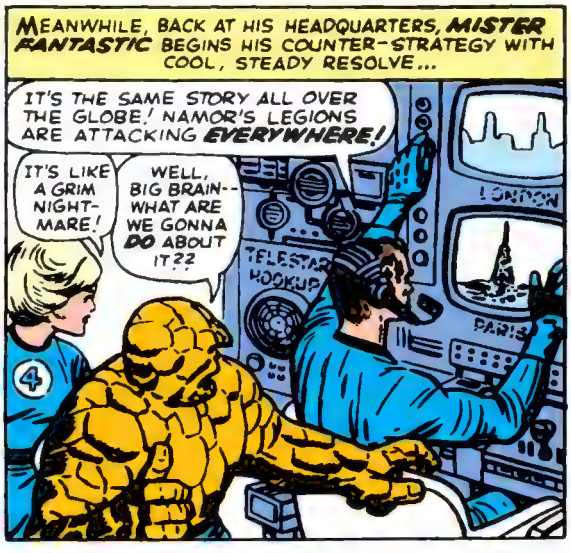
TAKEN COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE--HOPELESSLY OUTNUMBERED--NEW YORK'S POLICE OFFICERS FIND THEMSELVES PRISONERS OF A HOSTILE ARMY BEFORE A SHOT CAN BE FIRED!
THIS IS THE LAST OF THEM!
LOCK THEM IN THOSE CELLS!

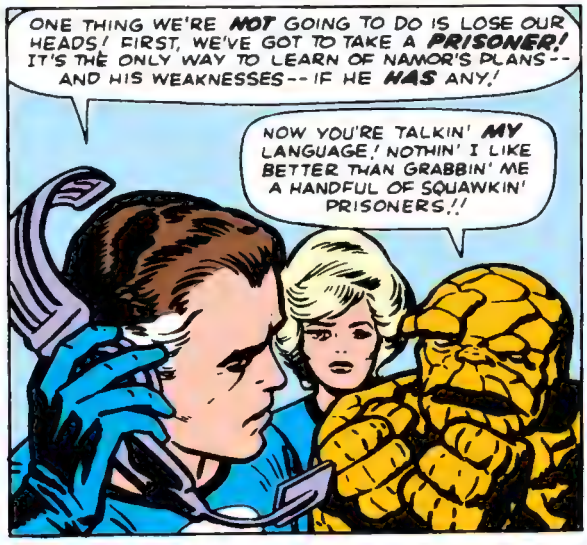
BY EARLY AFTERNOON, THE IMPOSSIBLE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT! NAMOR'S LEGIONS ARE IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE CAPTIVE CITY!
ROYAL
2 BIG 2
FEATURES
TODAY---
CITADEL OF

BUT THE SUB-MARINER'S MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO PUT THE POWERFUL FANTASTIC FOUR OUT OF ACTION, AND SO...
IT IS DONE! THE SKYSCRAPER TOWER IS COMPLETELY ENCASED IN LIQUID CEMENT! IT WILL HARDEN WITHIN SECONDS, IMPRISONING THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

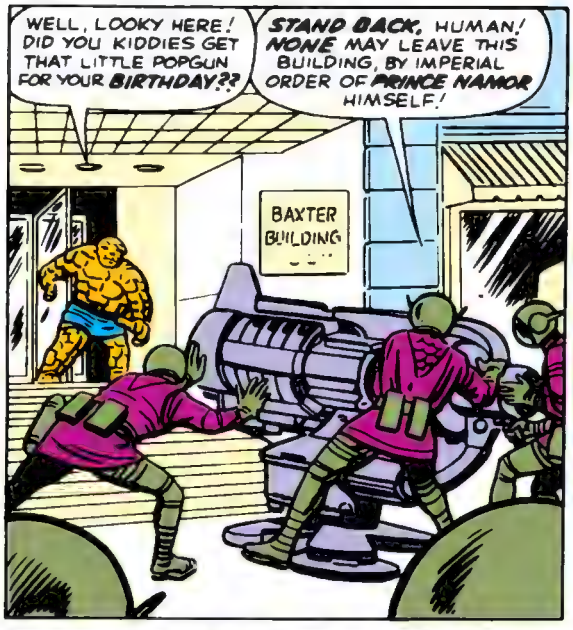
BUT, BEFORE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF SECONDS CAN SPEED BY...
FLAME ON!
THE ACCURSED HUMAN TORCH HAS BURNED THRU THE CEMENT SHELL! WE'VE FAILED!

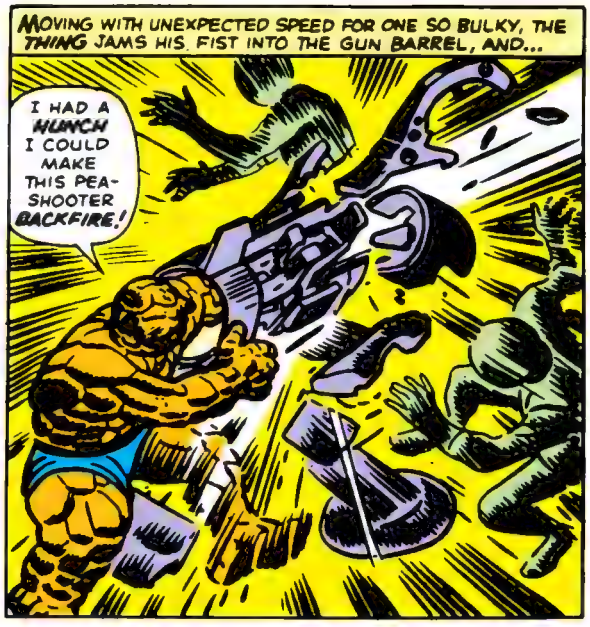

LIKE AN AVENGING METEOR, THE TORCH BLAZES THRU THE NEARBY AIRCRAFT, HANDING THE INVADERS THEIR FIRST LIMITED SET-BACK!
BAIL OUT! HE HAS DESTROYED OUR PLANES!
SO FAR SO GOOD! BUT NAMOR HAS THOUSANDS OF PLANES... I CAN'T DESTROY THEM ALL!

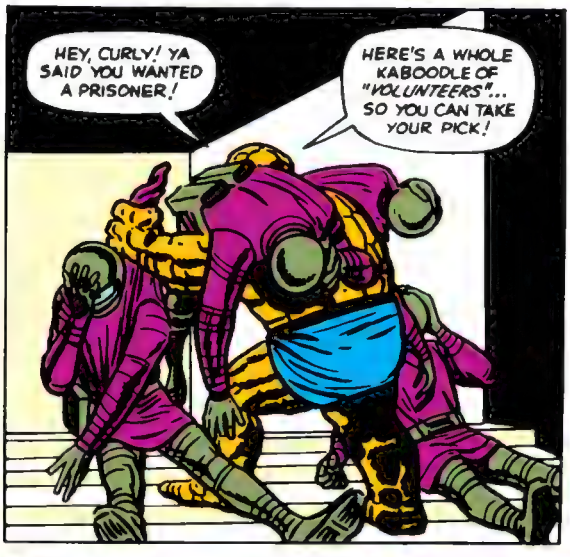

MEANWHILE, BACK AT HIS HEADQUARTERS, MISTER FANTASTIC BEGINS HIS COUNTER-STRATEGY WITH COOL, STEADY RESOLVE...
IT'S THE SAME STORY ALL OVER THE GLOBE! NAMOR'S LEGIONS ARE ATTACKING EVERYWHERE!
IT'S LIKE A GRIM NIGHT-MARE!
WELL, BIG BRAIN-- WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT IT??
LONDON
TELESTAR HOOKUP
PARIS
4


ONE THING WE'RE NOT GOING TO DO IS LOSE OUR HEADS! FIRST, WE'VE GOT TO TAKE A PRISONER! IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO LEARN OF NAMOR'S PLANS-- AND HIS WEAKNESSES-- IF HE HAS ANY!
NOW YOU'RE TALKIN' MY LANGUAGE! NOTHIN' I LIKE BETTER THAN GRABBIN' ME A HANDFUL OF SQUAWKIN' PRISONERS!!

BUT DON'T HURT ANYONE, OR DAMAGE ANY OF THEIR EQUIPMENT!
YEAH?? SUPPOSE I MUSS AN ITTY-BITTY HAIR ON THEIR FAT HEADS! WHAT'LL YA DO ABOUT IT-- SLAP MY WRIST??

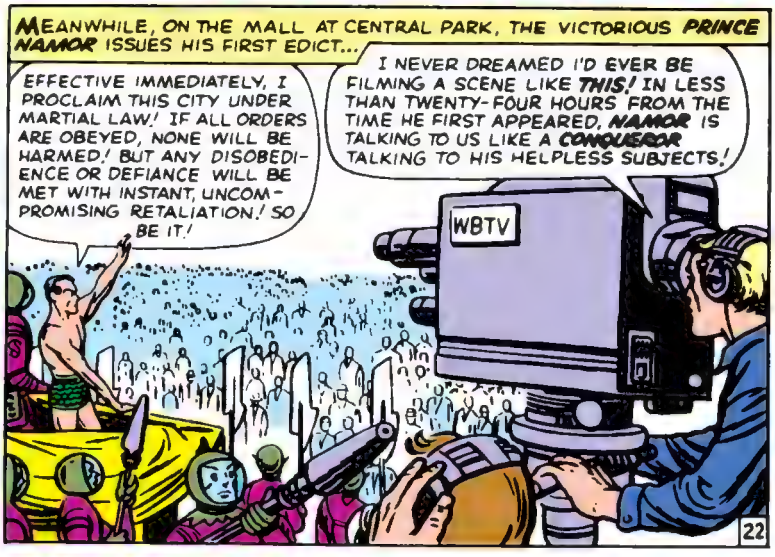

WELL, LOOKY HERE! DID YOU KIDDIES GET THAT LITTLE POPGUN FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY??
STAND BACK, HUMAN! NONE MAY LEAVE THIS BUILDING, BY IMPERIAL ORDER OF PRINCE NAMOR HIMSELF!
BAXTER BUILDING

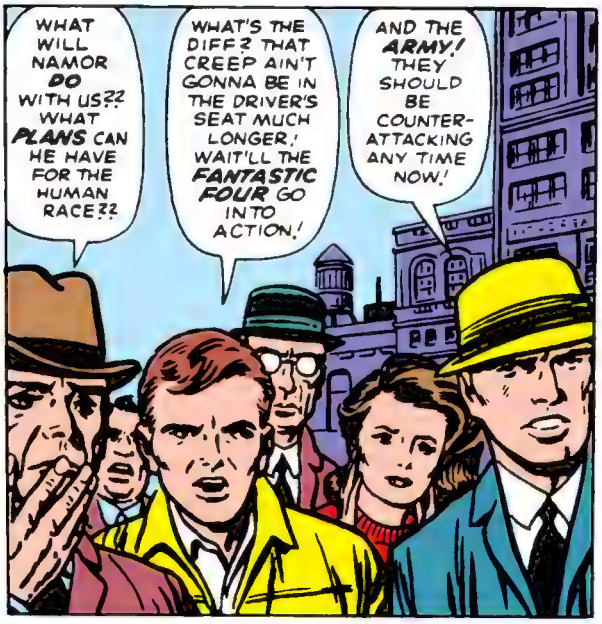

MOVING WITH UNEXPECTED SPEED FOR ONE SO BULKY, THE THING JAMS HIS FIST INTO THE GUN BARREL, AND...
I HAD A HUNCH I COULD MAKE THIS PEA-SHOOTER BACKFIRE!


HEY, CURLY! YA SAID YOU WANTED A PRISONER!
HERE'S A WHOLE KABOODLE OF "VOLUNTEERS"... SO YOU CAN TAKE YOUR PICK!

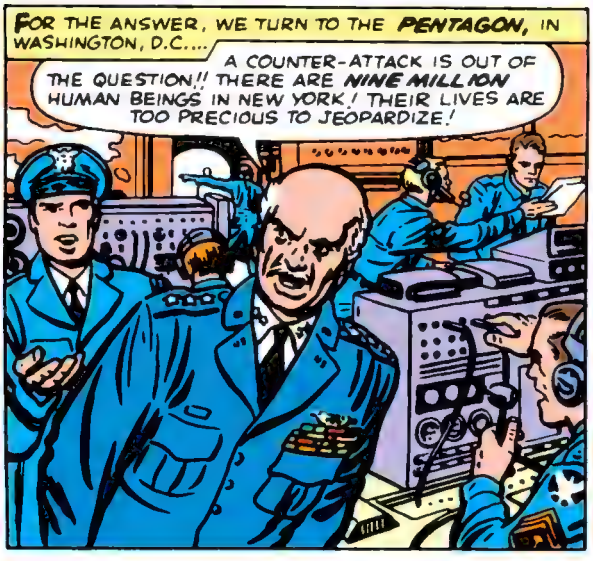
I REFUSE TO DIVULGE ANYTHING EXCEPT MY NAME, RANK, AND SERIAL NUMBER!
ZAT SO?? WHAT'LL YA BET I CAN MAKE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND??
NO NEED FOR THAT, BEN! HIS HELMET, FILLED WITH WATER, TELLS ME ALL I HAVE TO KNOW! NOW I HAVE THE ANSWER I WAS SEEKING!
4

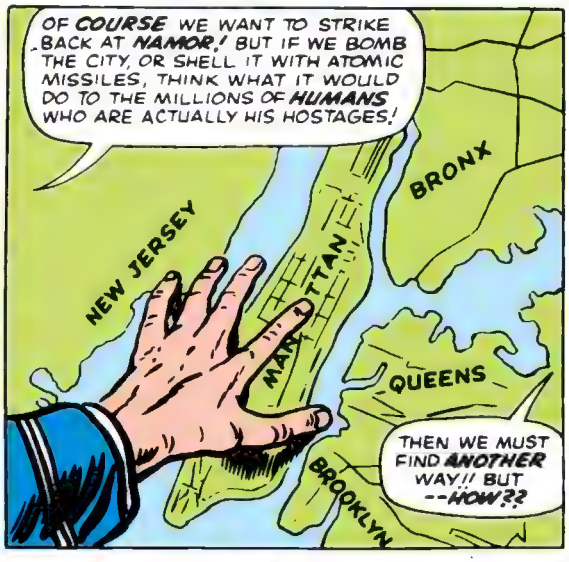
NAMOR HIMSELF IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN BREATHE AIR AND WATER! HIS PEOPLE CANNOT LIVE IN OUR ATMOSPHERE FOR MORE THAN A SHORT TIME WITHOUT WATER! SO, ALL I NEED DO IS FIND A WAY TO EVAPORATE THE LIFE-GIVING WATER FROM THEIR HELMETS...

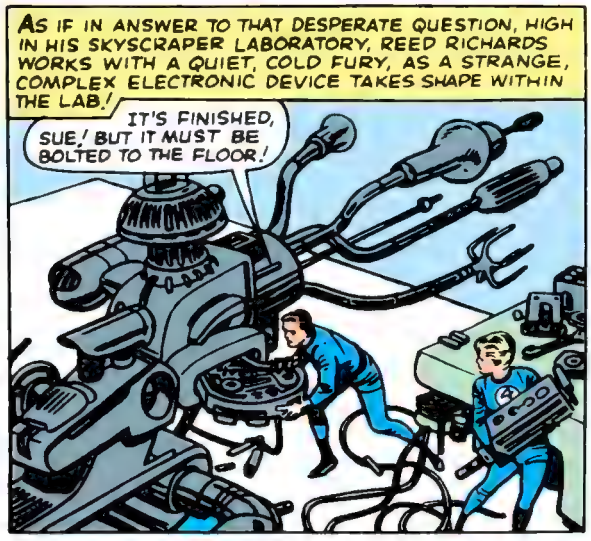

MEANWHILE, ON THE MALL AT CENTRAL PARK, THE VICTORIOUS PRINCE NAMOR ISSUES HIS FIRST EDICT...
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, I PROCLAIM THIS CITY UNDER MARTIAL LAW! IF ALL ORDERS ARE OBEYED, NONE WILL BE HARMED! BUT ANY DISOBEDIENCE OR DEFIANCE WILL BE MET WITH INSTANT, UNCOMPROMISING RETALIATION! SO BE IT!
I NEVER DREAMED I'D EVER BE FILMING A SCENE LIKE THIS! IN LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS FROM THE TIME HE FIRST APPEARED, NAMOR IS TALKING TO US LIKE A CONQUEROR TALKING TO HIS HELPLESS SUBJECTS!
WBTV

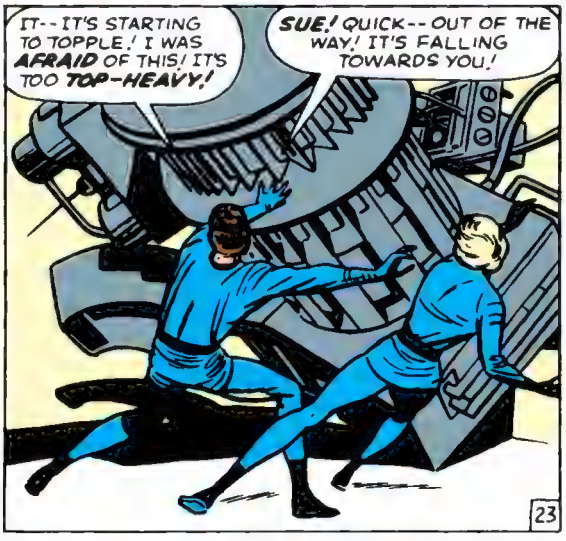

WHAT WILL NAMOR DO WITH US?? WHAT PLANS CAN HE HAVE FOR THE HUMAN RACE??
WHAT'S THE DIFF? THAT CREEP AIN'T GONNA BE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT MUCH LONGER! WAIT'LL THE FANTASTIC FOUR GO INTO ACTION!
AND THE ARMY! THEY SHOULD BE COUNTER-ATTACKING ANY TIME NOW!

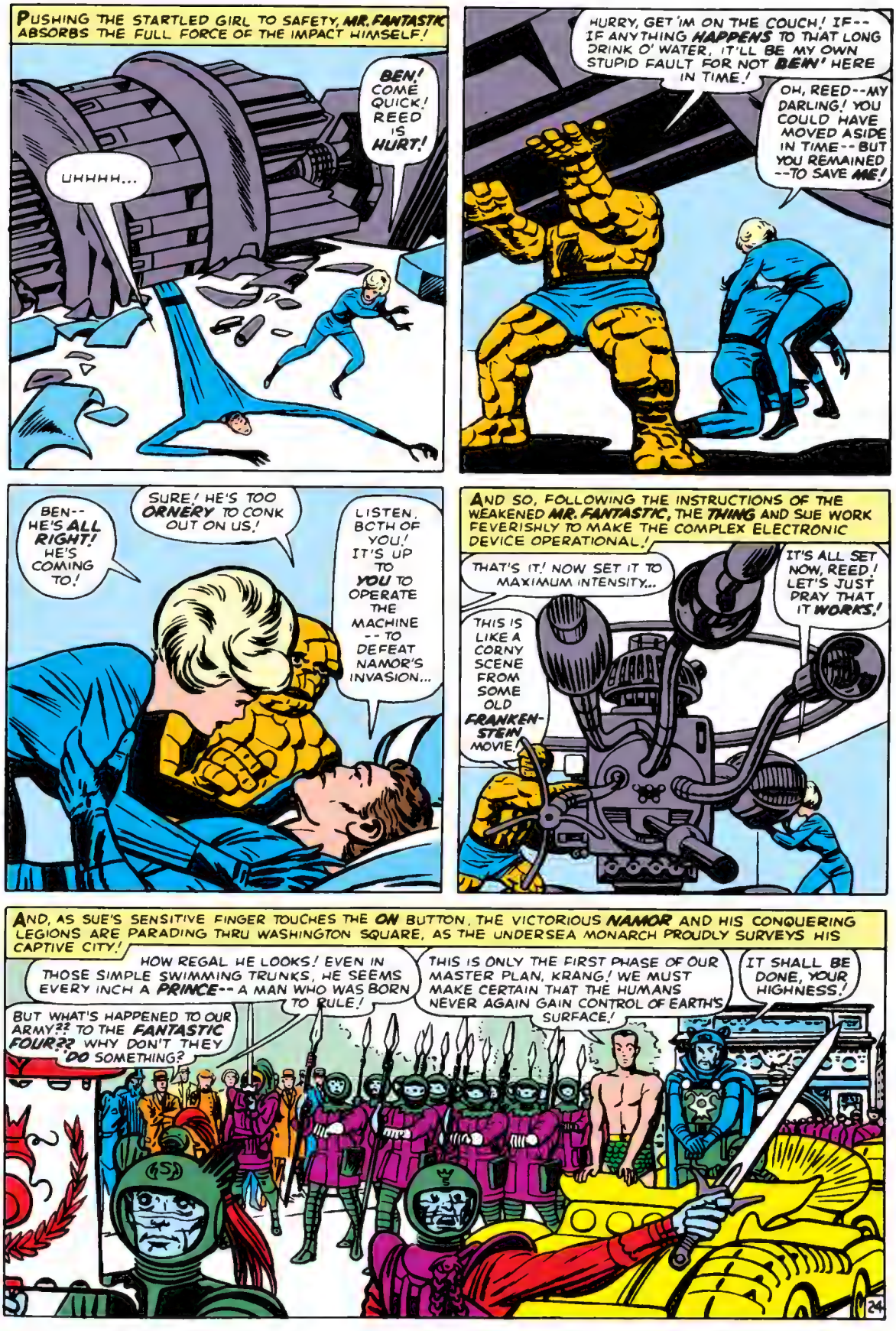
BUT, AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE SPRAWLING CITY, A FULL COMBAT DIVISION WAITS IMPATIENTLY FOR THE ORDER TO REPEL INVADERS--AN ORDER THAT IS DESTINED NEVER TO BE GIVEN!
I DON'T GET IT! WE'VE GOT ENOUGH ATOMIC MUSCLE TO DRIVE THOSE FISH-MEN BACK INTO THE SEA! WHY DON'T WE GET THE WORD??


FOR THE ANSWER, WE TURN TO THE PENTAGON, IN WASHINGTON, D.C....
A COUNTER-ATTACK IS OUT OF THE QUESTION!! THERE ARE NINE MILLION HUMAN BEINGS IN NEW YORK! THEIR LIVES ARE TOO PRECIOUS TO JEOPARDIZE!


OF COURSE WE WANT TO STRIKE BACK AT NAMOR! BUT IF WE BOMB THE CITY, OR SHELL IT WITH ATOMIC MISSILES, THINK WHAT IT WOULD DO TO THE MILLIONS OF HUMANS WHO ARE ACTUALLY HIS HOSTAGES!
NEW JERSEY
MANHATTAN
BRONX
QUEENS
BROOKLYN
THEN WE MUST FIND ANOTHER WAY!! BUT --HOW??


AS IF IN ANSWER TO THAT DESPERATE QUESTION, HIGH IN HIS SKYSCRAPER LABORATORY, REED RICHARDS WORKS WITH A QUIET, COLD FURY, AS A STRANGE, COMPLEX ELECTRONIC DEVICE TAKES SHAPE WITHIN THE LAB!
IT'S FINISHED, SUE! BUT IT MUST BE BOLTED TO THE FLOOR!


IT--IT'S STARTING TO TOPPLE! I WAS AFRAID OF THIS! IT'S TOO TOP-HEAVY!
SUE! QUICK--OUT OF THE WAY! IT'S FALLING TOWARDS YOU!


PUSHING THE STARTLED GIRL TO SAFETY, MR. FANTASTIC ABSORBS THE FULL FORCE OF THE IMPACT HIMSELF!
UHHHH...
BEN! COME QUICK! REED IS HURT!
HURRY, GET 'IM ON THE COUCH! IF--IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO THAT LONG DRINK O' WATER, IT'LL BE MY OWN STUPID FAULT FOR NOT BEIN' HERE IN TIME!
OH, REED--MY DARLING! YOU COULD HAVE MOVED ASIDE IN TIME--BUT YOU REMAINED --TO SAVE ME!
BEN--HE'S ALL RIGHT! HE'S COMING TO!
SURE! HE'S TOO ORNERY TO CONK OUT ON US!
LISTEN, BOTH OF YOU! IT'S UP TO YOU TO OPERATE THE MACHINE--TO DEFEAT NAMOR'S INVASION...
AND SO, FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE WEAKENED MR. FANTASTIC, THE THING AND SUE WORK FEVERISHLY TO MAKE THE COMPLEX ELECTRONIC DEVICE OPERATIONAL!
THAT'S IT! NOW SET IT TO MAXIMUM INTENSITY...
IT'S ALL SET NOW, REED! LET'S JUST PRAY THAT IT WORKS!
THIS IS LIKE A CORNY SCENE FROM SOME OLD FRANKEN-STEIN MOVIE.
AND, AS SUE'S SENSITIVE FINGER TOUCHES THE ON BUTTON, THE VICTORIOUS NAMOR AND HIS CONQUERING LEGIONS ARE PARADING THRU WASHINGTON SQUARE, AS THE UNDERSEA MONARCH PROUDLY SURVEYS HIS CAPTIVE CITY!
HOW REGAL HE LOOKS! EVEN IN THOSE SIMPLE SWIMMING TRUNKS, HE SEEMS EVERY INCH A PRINCE--A MAN WHO WAS BORN TO RULE!
THIS IS ONLY THE FIRST PHASE OF OUR MASTER PLAN, KRANG! WE MUST MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE HUMANS NEVER AGAIN GAIN CONTROL OF EARTH'S SURFACE!
IT SHALL BE DONE, YOUR HIGHNESS!
BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO OUR ARMY?? TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR?? WHY DON'T THEY 'DO SOMETHING?
24

AT THAT VERY SECOND A LOW, DISCORDANT HUM IS HEARD THRUOUT THE CITY, AS POWERFUL, INVISIBLE RAYS STRIKE OUT FROM THE TOWER OF THE **BAXTER BUILDING**, DRAINING DRY THE HELMET OF EVERY ONE OF NAMOR'S INVADING WARRIORS!

LOOK!! THE UNDERSEA SOLDIERS -- SOMETHING'S **HAPPENING** TO THEM!!

THAT EERIE **HUM!!** WHERE IS IT COMING FROM? WHAT **IS** IT?

MMMMMMMMM

MMMMM

MMMMM

MMMMM

MY MEN ARE SUFFOCATING! THEIR HELMET WATER IS **EVAPORATING!!**

QUICK! BACK TO THE SEA! **ALL** OF YOU!

WITHIN MINUTES, THE ONCE-VICTORIOUS ARMY BECOMES A GASPING, WHEEZING HELPLESS HORDE!

THEY HAVE ONLY ONE OBJECTIVE --ONE GOAL-- TO REACH THE LIFE-GIVING SEA WHILE THERE STILL IS TIME!

AND SO, AS SUDDENLY AS IT HAD BEGUN, THE INCREDIBLE INVASION IS **ENDED!** THE CITY IS SAVED!

BUT THERE IS **ONE** INVADER WHO HAS **NOT** RETURNED TO THE SEA...

THE ACCURSED EVAPORATION RAY BLANKETED THE EARTH! MY MEN RETREATED FROM EVERY OCCUPIED CITY! ONLY **MR. FANTASTIC** COULD BE RESPONSIBLE!

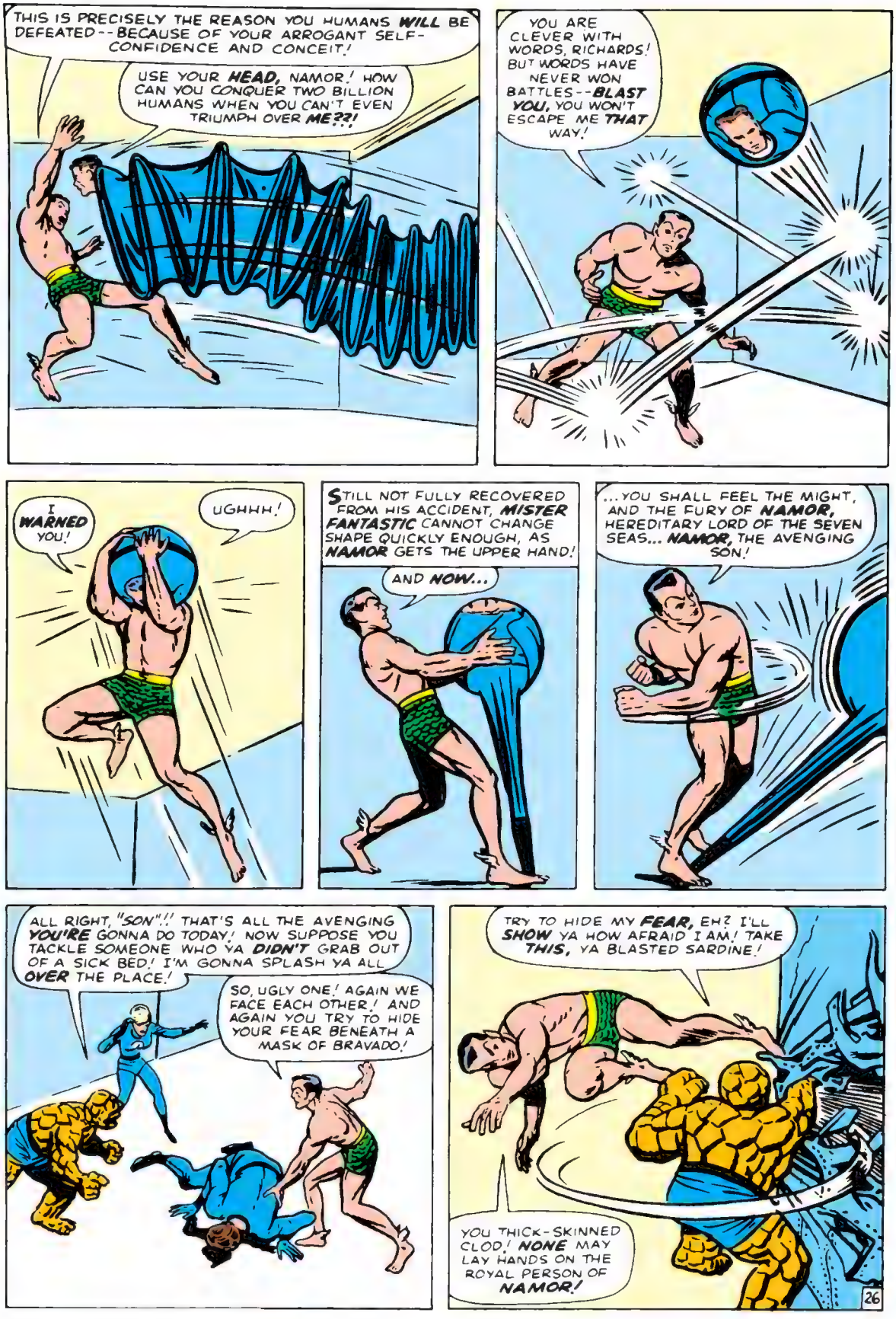
NAMOR! I WAS EXPECTING YOU!

YOU HAVE ONLY WON THE FIRST SKIRMISH! BUT THE **WAR** GOES ON!

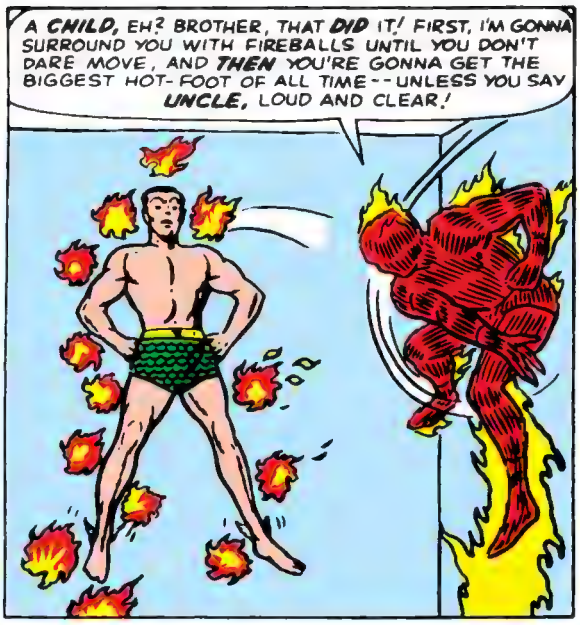
STILL IN A WEAKENED CONDITION, REED RICHARDS CANNOT MOVE FAST ENOUGH TO EVADE THE **SUB-MARINER'S** POWERFUL ATTACK!

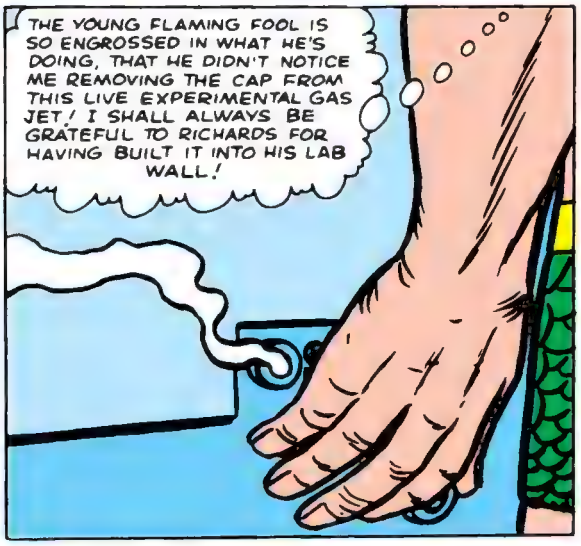
I SHALL SEE TO IT THAT YOU NEVER AGAIN UPSET THE GRAND DESIGN OF MY PEOPLE!

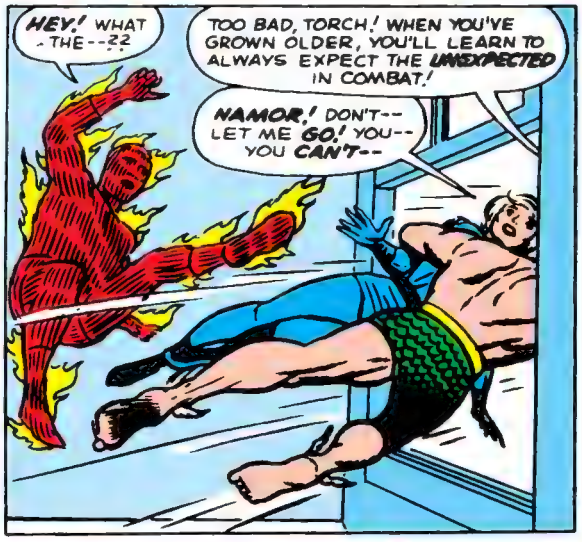
YOU'RE A **FOOL,** NAMOR! YOU CAN **NEVER** DEFEAT THE HUMAN RACE!

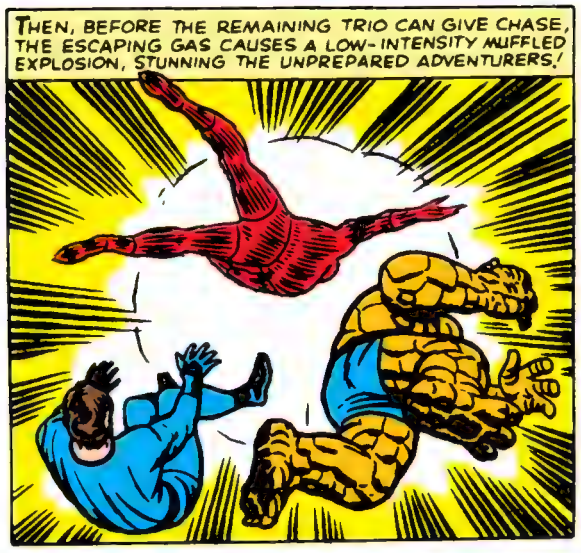

THIS IS PRECISELY THE REASON YOU HUMANS WILL BE DEFEATED--BECAUSE OF YOUR ARROGANT SELF-CONFIDENCE AND CONCEIT!
USE YOUR HEAD, NAMOR! HOW CAN YOU CONQUER TWO BILLION HUMANS WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN TRIUMPH OVER ME??!
YOU ARE CLEVER WITH WORDS, RICHARDS! BUT WORDS HAVE NEVER WON BATTLES--BLAST YOU, YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME THAT WAY!
I WARNED YOU!
UGHHH!
STILL NOT FULLY RECOVERED FROM HIS ACCIDENT, MISTER FANTASTIC CANNOT CHANGE SHAPE QUICKLY ENOUGH, AS NAMOR GETS THE UPPER HAND!
AND NOW...
...YOU SHALL FEEL THE MIGHT, AND THE FURY OF NAMOR, HEREDITARY LORD OF THE SEVEN SEAS... NAMOR, THE AVENGING SON!
ALL RIGHT, "SON"!! THAT'S ALL THE AVENGING YOU'RE GONNA DO TODAY! NOW SUPPOSE YOU TACKLE SOMEONE WHO YA DIDN'T GRAB OUT OF A SICK BED! I'M GONNA SPLASH YA ALL OVER THE PLACE!
SO, UGLY ONE! AGAIN WE FACE EACH OTHER! AND AGAIN YOU TRY TO HIDE YOUR FEAR BENEATH A MASK OF BRAVADO!
TRY TO HIDE MY FEAR, EH? I'LL SHOW YA HOW AFRAID I AM! TAKE THIS, YA BLASTED SARDINE!
YOU THICK-SKINNED CLOD! NONE MAY LAY HANDS ON THE ROYAL PERSON OF NAMOR!

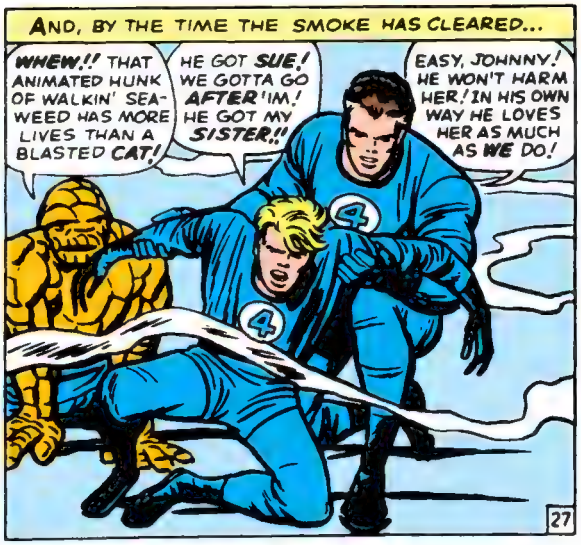
C'MON, BEN, STOP HOGGIN' ALL THE FUN! I'M GONNA MAKE OL' FISH-FACE EAT THOSE WORDS!
BEGONE, TORCH! IT IS BENEATH MY ROYAL DIGNITY TO BATTLE WITH A CHILD!

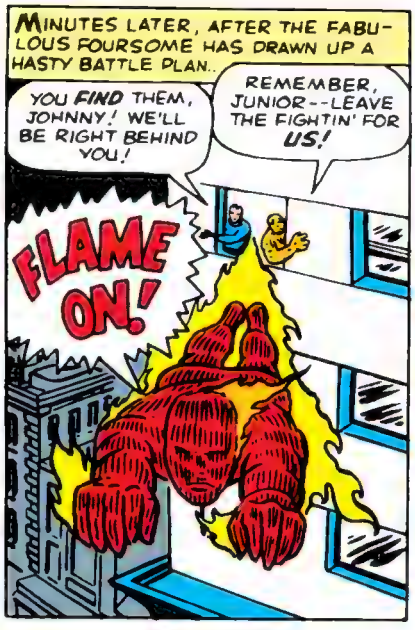

A CHILD, EH? BROTHER, THAT DID IT! FIRST, I'M GONNA SURROUND YOU WITH FIREBALLS UNTIL YOU DON'T DARE MOVE, AND THEN YOU'RE GONNA GET THE BIGGEST HOT-FOOT OF ALL TIME--UNLESS YOU SAY UNCLE, LOUD AND CLEAR!

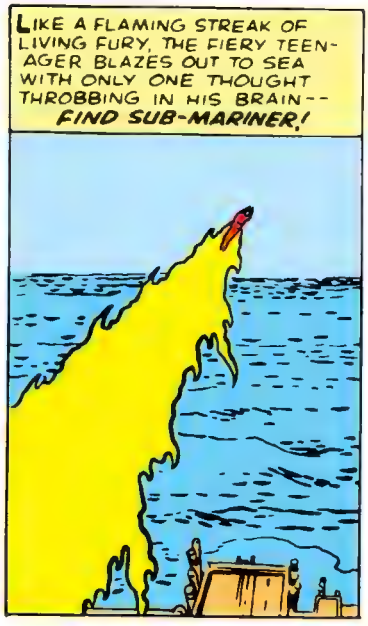

THE YOUNG FLAMING FOOL IS SO ENGROSSED IN WHAT HE'S DOING, THAT HE DIDN'T NOTICE ME REMOVING THE CAP FROM THIS LIVE EXPERIMENTAL GAS JET! I SHALL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO RICHARDS FOR HAVING BUILT IT INTO HIS LAB WALL!

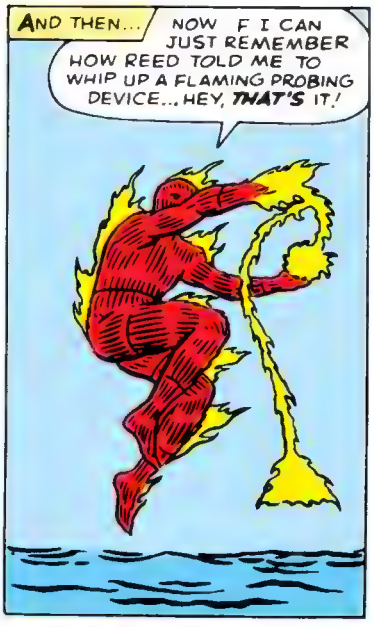

HEY! WHAT--THE--??
TOO BAD, TORCH! WHEN YOU'VE GROWN OLDER, YOU'LL LEARN TO ALWAYS EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED IN COMBAT!
NAMOR! DON'T--LET ME GO! YOU--YOU CAN'T--

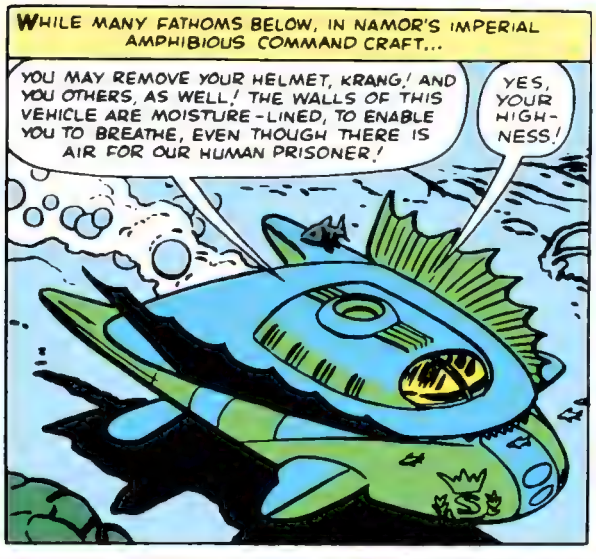

THEN, BEFORE THE REMAINING TRIO CAN GIVE CHASE, THE ESCAPING GAS CAUSES A LOW-INTENSITY MUFFLED EXPLOSION, STUNNING THE UNPREPARED ADVENTURERS!

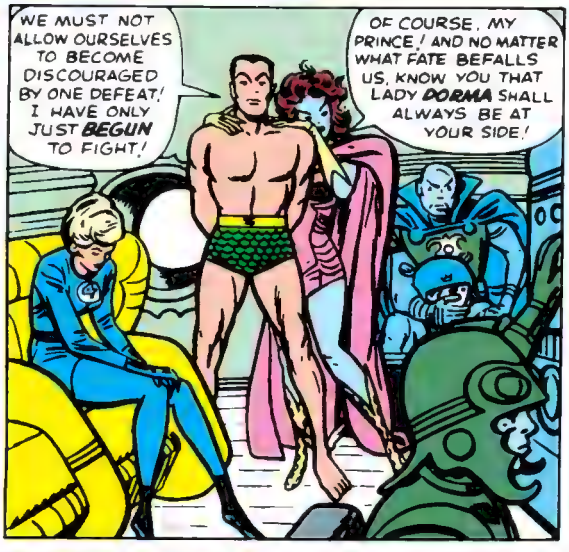

AND, BY THE TIME THE SMOKE HAS CLEARED...
WHEW!! THAT ANIMATED HUNK OF WALKIN' SEA-WEED HAS MORE LIVES THAN A BLASTED CAT!
HE GOT SUE! WE GOTTA GO AFTER 'IM! HE GOT MY SISTER!!
EASY, JOHNNY! HE WON'T HARM HER! IN HIS OWN WAY HE LOVES HER AS MUCH AS WE DO!


MINUTES LATER, AFTER THE FABULOUS FOURSOME HAS DRAWN UP A HASTY BATTLE PLAN..
YOU FIND THEM, JOHNNY! WE'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
REMEMBER, JUNIOR--LEAVE THE FIGHTIN' FOR US!
FLAME ON!

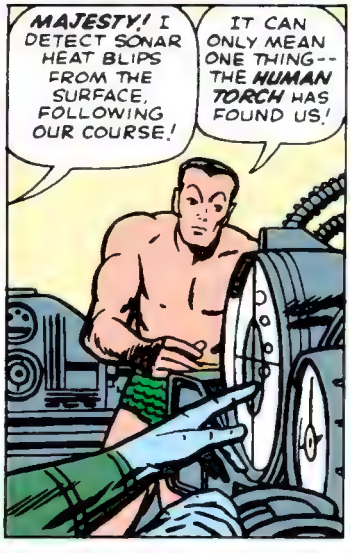

LIKE A FLAMING STREAK OF LIVING FURY, THE FIERY TEENAGER BLAZES OUT TO SEA WITH ONLY ONE THOUGHT THROBBING IN HIS BRAIN--
FIND SUB-MARINER!


AND THEN...
NOW IF I CAN JUST REMEMBER HOW REED TOLD ME TO WHIP UP A FLAMING PROBING DEVICE... HEY, THAT'S IT!

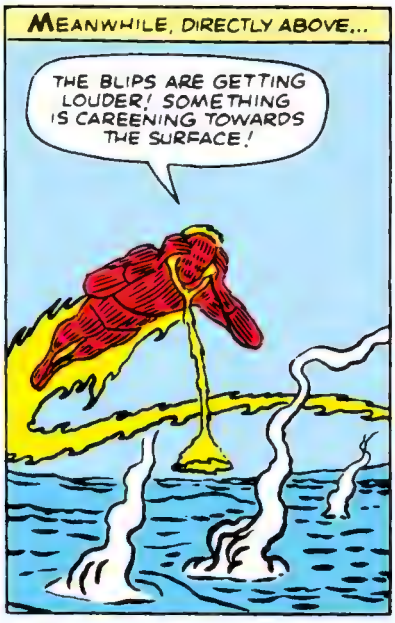

WHILE MANY FATHOMS BELOW, IN NAMOR'S IMPERIAL AMPHIBIOUS COMMAND CRAFT...
YOU MAY REMOVE YOUR HELMET, KRANG! AND YOU OTHERS, AS WELL! THE WALLS OF THIS VEHICLE ARE MOISTURE-LINED, TO ENABLE YOU TO BREATHE, EVEN THOUGH THERE IS AIR FOR OUR HUMAN PRISONER!
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS!

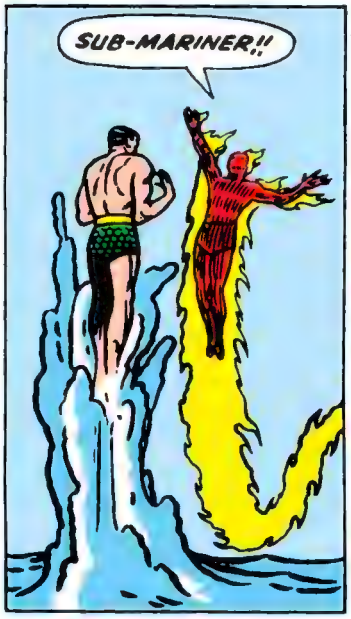

WE MUST NOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BECOME DISCOURAGED BY ONE DEFEAT! I HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO FIGHT!
OF COURSE, MY PRINCE! AND NO MATTER WHAT FATE BEFALLS US, KNOW YOU THAT LADY DORMA SHALL ALWAYS BE AT YOUR SIDE!

ENOUGH! I HAVE NO PATIENCE FOR SUCH TALK! THE FANTASTIC FOUR WILL SOON BE AFTER US TO RESCUE THEIR ABDUCTED MEMBER! WE MUST PREPARE OUR DEFENSES!

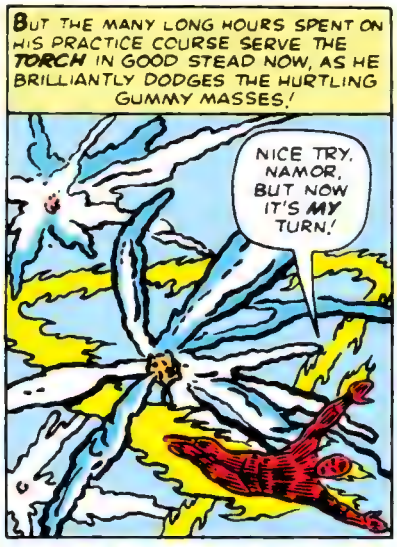

MAJESTY! I DETECT SONAR HEAT BLIPS FROM THE SURFACE, FOLLOWING OUR COURSE!
IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING--THE HUMAN TORCH HAS FOUND US!

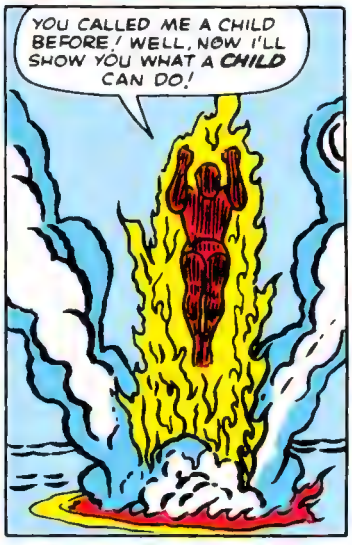
NAMOR--WAIT! HE--HE'S ONLY A BOY! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO??
I SHALL DO WHAT I MUST! OUR PEOPLES ARE AT WAR... AND I MUST NOT SHIRK MY ROYAL DUTY!

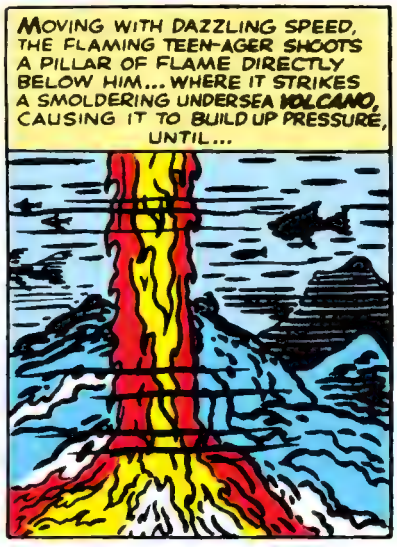

MEANWHILE, DIRECTLY ABOVE...
THE BLIPS ARE GETTING LOUDER! SOMETHING IS CAREENING TOWARDS THE SURFACE!

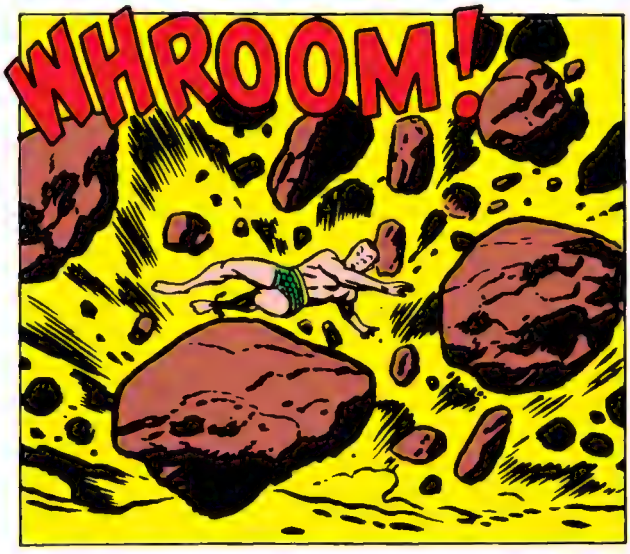

SUB-MARINER!!

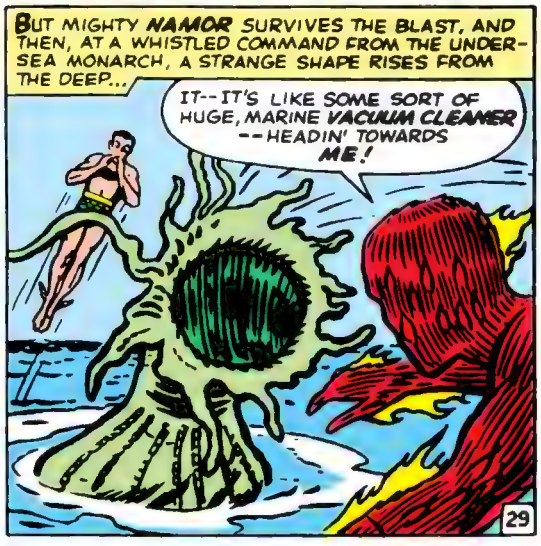
THESE UNDERSEA SPROCKET-FISH SHOOT OUT A GUMMY SUBSTANCE WHICH WILL SMOTHER YOUR FLAME! AND THEN, YOU SHALL BE MY SECOND PRISONER!

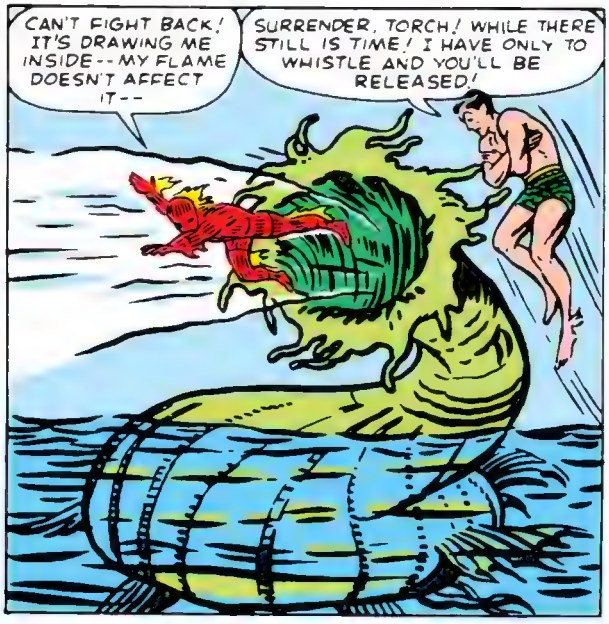

BUT THE MANY LONG HOURS SPENT ON HIS PRACTICE COURSE SERVE THE TORCH IN GOOD STEAD NOW, AS HE BRILLIANTLY DODGES THE HURTLING GUMMY MASSES!
NICE TRY, NAMOR, BUT NOW IT'S MY TURN!


YOU CALLED ME A CHILD BEFORE! WELL, NOW I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT A CHILD CAN DO!

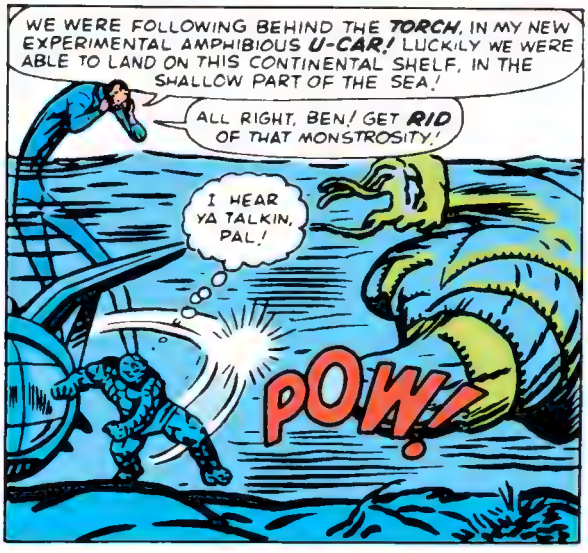

MOVING WITH DAZZLING SPEED, THE FLAMING TEEN-AGER SHOOTS A PILLAR OF FLAME DIRECTLY BELOW HIM... WHERE IT STRIKES A SMOLDERING UNDERSEA VOLCANO, CAUSING IT TO BUILD UP PRESSURE, UNTIL...


WHROOM!

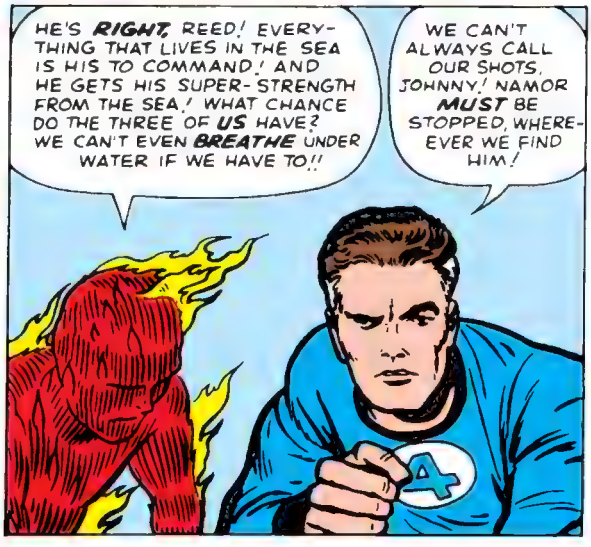

BUT MIGHTY NAMOR SURVIVES THE BLAST, AND THEN, AT A WHISTLED COMMAND FROM THE UNDER-SEA MONARCH, A STRANGE SHAPE RISES FROM THE DEEP...
IT--IT'S LIKE SOME SORT OF HUGE, MARINE VACUUM CLEANER --HEADIN' TOWARDS ME!


CAN'T FIGHT BACK! IT'S DRAWING ME INSIDE--MY FLAME DOESN'T AFFECT IT--
SURRENDER, TORCH! WHILE THERE STILL IS TIME! I HAVE ONLY TO WHISTLE AND YOU'LL BE RELEASED!

DON'T DO IT JOHNNY! YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT! WE'LL TAKE OVER NOW!
REED! YOU'RE JUST IN TIME!
MISTER FANTASTIC!! BUT--HOW??


WE WERE FOLLOWING BEHIND THE TORCH, IN MY NEW EXPERIMENTAL AMPHIBIOUS U-CAR! LUCKILY WE WERE ABLE TO LAND ON THIS CONTINENTAL SHELF, IN THE SHALLOW PART OF THE SEA!
ALL RIGHT, BEN! GET RID OF THAT MONSTROSITY!
I HEAR YA TALKIN, PAL!
POW!

DO NOT GLOAT YET, REED RICHARDS! THOUGH THE THREE OF YOU OPPOSE ME, WE ARE NOW FIGHTING ON MY HOME GROUNDS! IT IS NOW YOU WHO ARE OUT OF YOUR ELEMENT!


HE'S RIGHT, REED! EVERYTHING THAT LIVES IN THE SEA IS HIS TO COMMAND! AND HE GETS HIS SUPER-STRENGTH FROM THE SEA! WHAT CHANCE DO THE THREE OF US HAVE? WE CAN'T EVEN BREATHE UNDER WATER IF WE HAVE TO!!
WE CAN'T ALWAYS CALL OUR SHOTS, JOHNNY! NAMOR MUST BE STOPPED, WHEREEVER WE FIND HIM!

BESIDES, SUE IS HIS PRISONER! AND WE'LL HOUND HIM TILL THE END OF ETERNITY BEFORE WE ABANDON HER!
BRAVE WORDS, REED RICHARDS! TOO BAD THAT THEY MAY PROVE TO BE --YOUR EPITAPH!

AND THEN, AS NAMOR LANDS THE FIRST AWESOME BLOW, THE CLASH OF TITANS BEGINS!
ZOOOM
POW!
SEIZING THE PLIABLE FORM OF REED RICHARDS, NAMOR FASHIONS A CRUDE CANDLE-SNUFFER OUT OF HIS STUNNED BODY!
COME CLOSER, TORCH --CLOSER!
JUST TRY 'N STOP ME, BIG MAN!
YOU MEAN-- LIKE THIS???
UNNGHHHH...
CAUGHT BY SURPRISE, THE TORCH'S FLAME IS SUDDENLY SNUFFED OUT--BUT, AT THAT SPLIT-SECOND, MR. FANTASTIC REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS, AND...
TAKE YOUR CLAMMY HANDS OFF ME, NAMOR!
REED-- GRAB ME! I'M FALLIN'!!
SNAP!
EASY, BOY! WE'LL TAKE THE PLUNGE TOGETHER --AND WE'LL BRING NAMOR WITH US!
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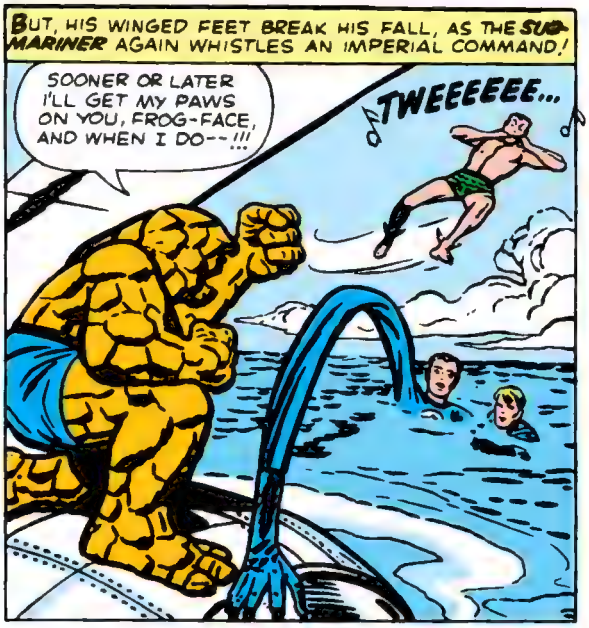
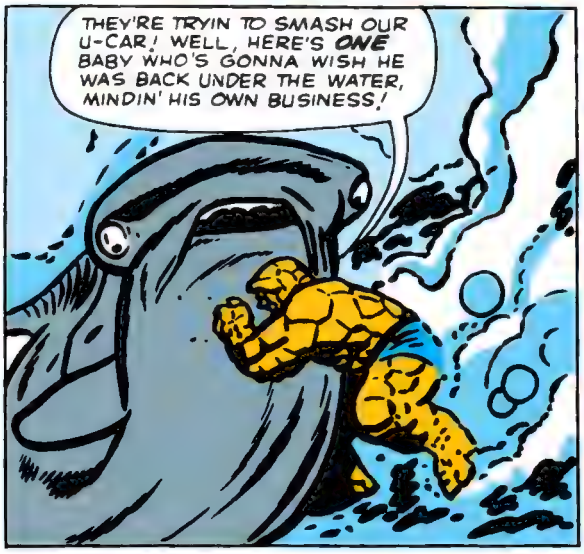
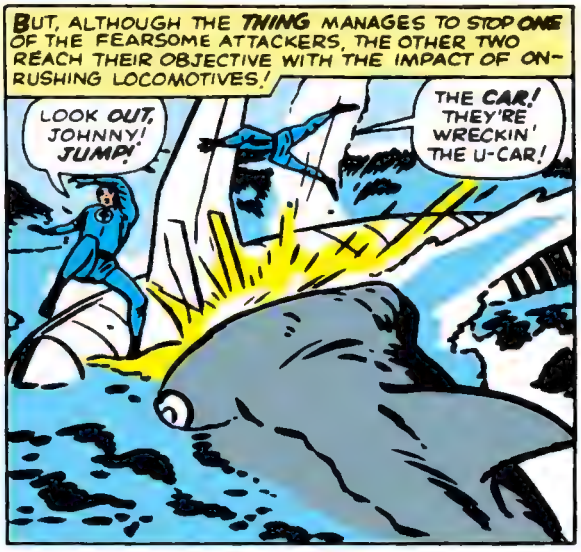
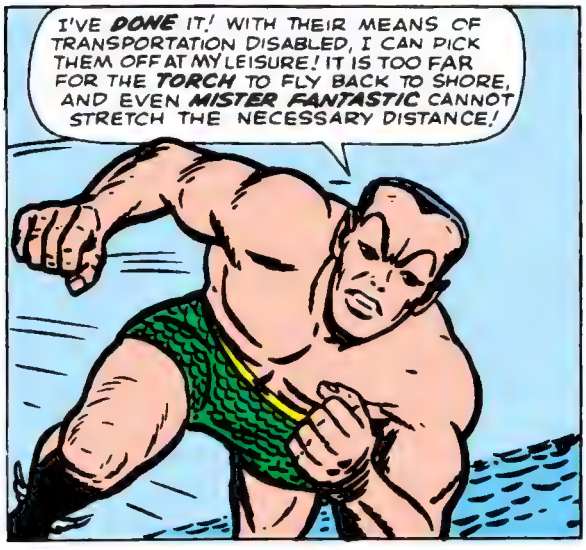
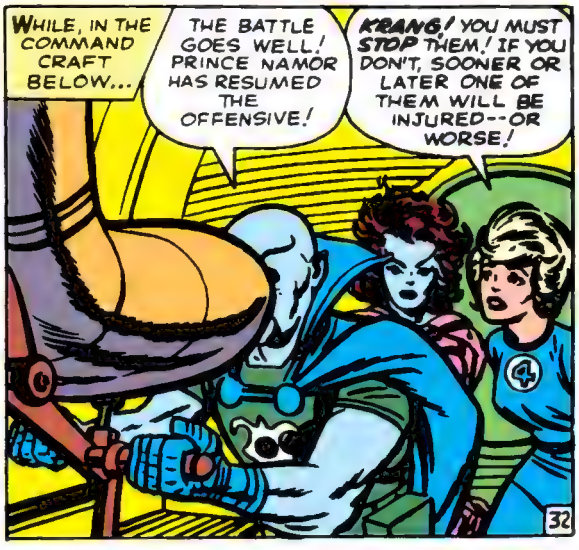

BUT, HIS WINGED FEET BREAK HIS FALL, AS THE SUB-MARINER AGAIN WHISTLES AN IMPERIAL COMMAND!
SOONER OR LATER I'LL GET MY PAWS ON YOU, FROG-FACE, AND WHEN I DO--!!!
TWEEEEEE...

SUDDENLY, RESPONDING TO NAMOR'S SIGNAL, THREE ENORMOUS, HAMMER-HEADED FISH, OF THE SHARK VARIETY, CONVERGE UPON THE FLOATING U-CAR...
THAT'S IT, MY PETS! AND NOW-- ALL TOGETHER --STRIKE!


THEY'RE TRYIN TO SMASH OUR U-CAR! WELL, HERE'S ONE BABY WHO'S GONNA WISH HE WAS BACK UNDER THE WATER, MINDIN' HIS OWN BUSINESS!


BUT, ALTHOUGH THE THING MANAGES TO STOP ONE OF THE FEARSOME ATTACKERS, THE OTHER TWO REACH THEIR OBJECTIVE WITH THE IMPACT OF ON-RUSHING LOCOMOTIVES!
LOOK OUT, JOHNNY! JUMP!
THE CAR! THEY'RE WRECKIN' THE U-CAR!


I'VE DONE IT! WITH THEIR MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION DISABLED, I CAN PICK THEM OFF AT MY LEISURE! IT IS TOO FAR FOR THE TORCH TO FLY BACK TO SHORE, AND EVEN MISTER FANTASTIC CANNOT STRETCH THE NECESSARY DISTANCE!

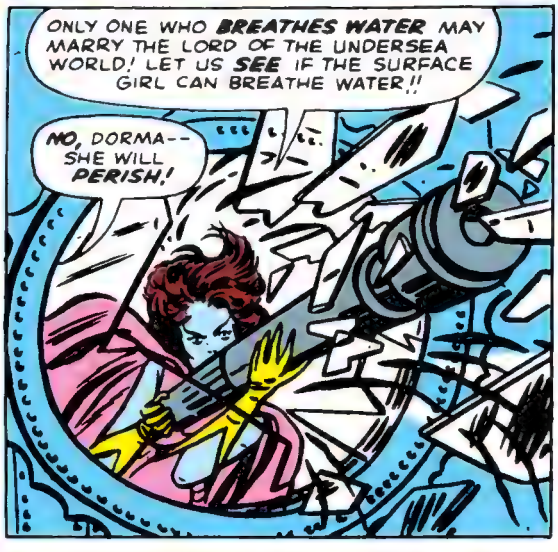

WHILE, IN THE COMMAND CRAFT BELOW...
THE BATTLE GOES WELL! PRINCE NAMOR HAS RESUMED THE OFFENSIVE!
KRANG! YOU MUST STOP THEM! IF YOU DON'T, SOONER OR LATER ONE OF THEM WILL BE INJURED--OR WORSE!

STRANGE...THOUGH YOU ARE A HUMAN, YOU SOUND AS CONCERNED FOR NAMOR'S SAFETY AS FOR THAT OF YOUR OWN KIND!
OF COURSE I'M CONCERNED ABOUT NAMOR! HE ISN'T BAD--HE'S FIGHTING FOR WHAT HE BELIEVES IN, THE SAME AS WE HUMANS ARE!

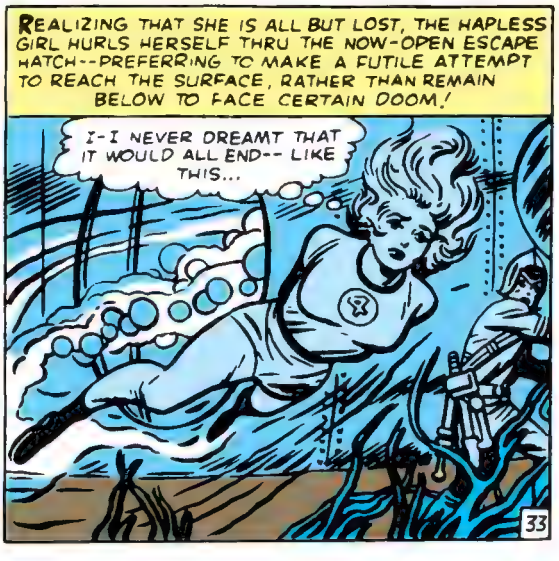
HMMMM! I BEGIN TO SUSPECT NOW THERE IS A BOND BETWEEN YOU AND PRINCE NAMOR! YOU ARE NOT A CHANCE PRISONER WHOM HE HAS CAPTURED!
NO! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE! NAMOR COULD NEVER LOVE A HUMAN! HE IS A PRINCE OF ATLANTIS!! AND I AM TO BE HIS PRINCESS!

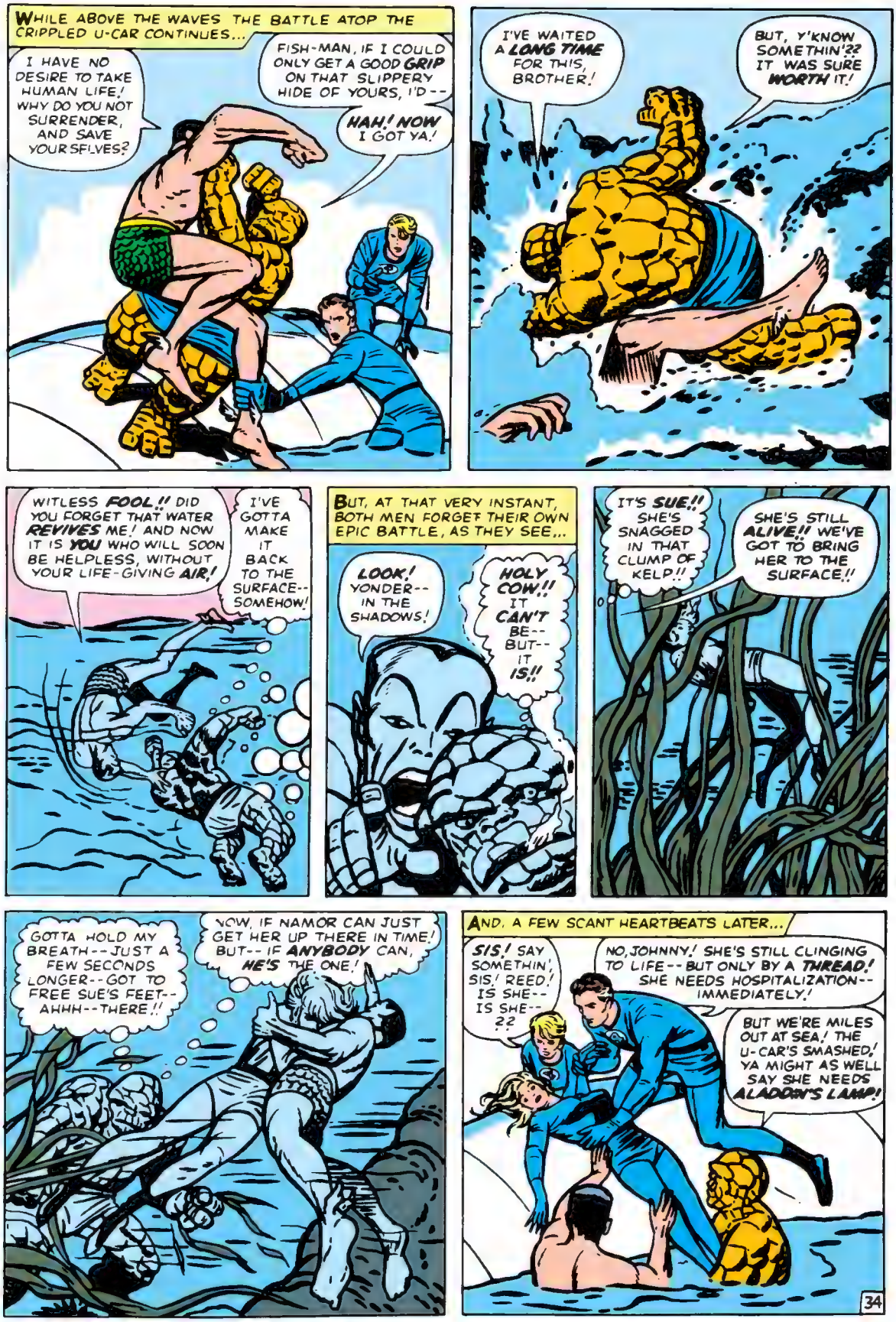
YOU SHALL NOT COME BETWEEN US, SURFACE GIRL!! I'LL DESTROY YOU FIRST!

DORMA! WAIT-- DON'T YOU SEE WHAT THIS MEANS?? IF NAMOR LOVES THIS HUMAN, THEN YOU ARE FREE TO BE MINE!
NO!! IT IS NAMOR I LOVE! IT IS NAMOR I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED! STAND ASIDE, KRANG-- I COMMAND YOU!


ONLY ONE WHO BREATHES WATER MAY MARRY THE LORD OF THE UNDERSEA WORLD! LET US SEE IF THE SURFACE GIRL CAN BREATHE WATER!!
NO, DORMA-- SHE WILL PERISH!

QUICK! REPAIR THAT BREACH BEFORE OUR PRISONER DROWNS!
IT IS TOO LATE, MY LORD KRANG! THERE IS NOT TIME!


REALIZING THAT SHE IS ALL BUT LOST, THE HAPLESS GIRL HURLS HERSELF THRU THE NOW-OPEN ESCAPE HATCH--PREFERRING TO MAKE A FUTILE ATTEMPT TO REACH THE SURFACE, RATHER THAN REMAIN BELOW TO FACE CERTAIN DOOM!
I-I NEVER DREAMT THAT IT WOULD ALL END-- LIKE THIS...


WHILE ABOVE THE WAVES THE BATTLE ATOP THE CRIPPLED U-CAR CONTINUES...
I HAVE NO DESIRE TO TAKE HUMAN LIFE,! WHY DO YOU NOT SURRENDER, AND SAVE YOURSELVES?
FISH-MAN, IF I COULD ONLY GET A GOOD GRIP ON THAT SLIPPERY HIDE OF YOURS, I'D--
HAH! NOW I GOT YA!
I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS, BROTHER!
BUT, Y'KNOW SOMETHIN'?? IT WAS SURE WORTH IT!
WITLESS FOOL!! DID YOU FORGET THAT WATER REVIVES ME,! AND NOW IT IS YOU WHO WILL SOON BE HELPLESS, WITHOUT YOUR LIFE-GIVING AIR!
I'VE GOTTA MAKE IT BACK TO THE SURFACE-- SOMEHOW!
BUT, AT THAT VERY INSTANT, BOTH MEN FORGET THEIR OWN EPIC BATTLE, AS THEY SEE...
LOOK! YONDER-- IN THE SHADOWS!
HOLY COW!! IT CAN'T BE-- BUT-- IT IS!!
IT'S SUE!! SHE'S SNAGGED IN THAT CLUMP OF KELP!!
SHE'S STILL ALIVE!! WE'VE GOT TO BRING HER TO THE SURFACE!!
GOTTA HOLD MY BREATH--JUST A FEW SECONDS LONGER--GOT TO FREE SUE'S FEET-- AHHH--THERE!!
NOW, IF NAMOR CAN JUST GET HER UP THERE IN TIME! BUT-- IF ANYBODY CAN, HE'S THE ONE!
AND, A FEW SCANT HEARTBEATS LATER...
SIS,! SAY SOMETHIN', SIS,! REED,! IS SHE-- IS SHE-- ??
NO, JOHNNY,! SHE'S STILL CLINGING TO LIFE-- BUT ONLY BY A THREAD,! SHE NEEDS HOSPITALIZATION-- IMMEDIATELY,!
BUT WE'RE MILES OUT AT SEA,! THE U-CAR'S SMASHED,! YA MIGHT AS WELL SAY SHE NEEDS ALADDIN'S LAMP!
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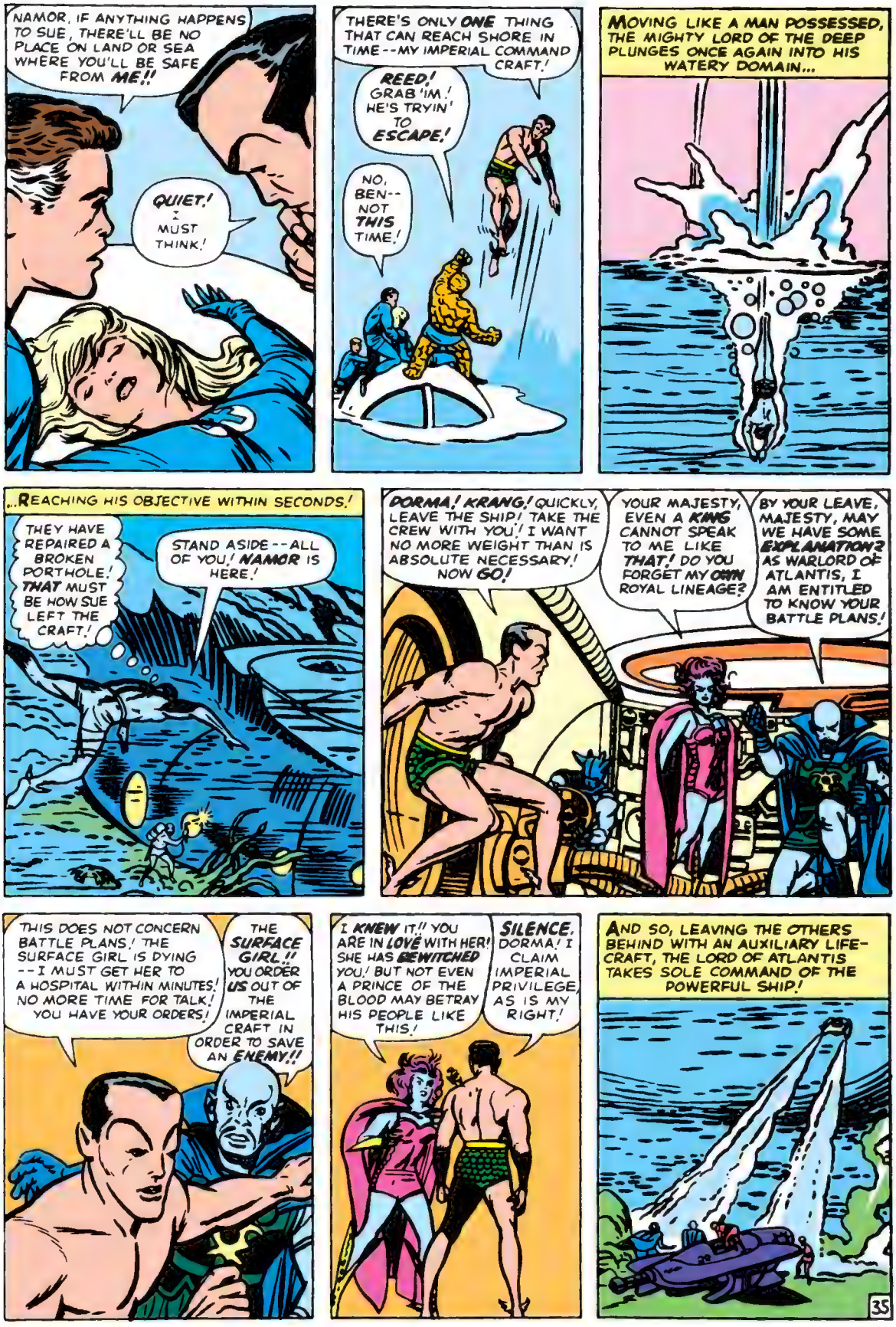
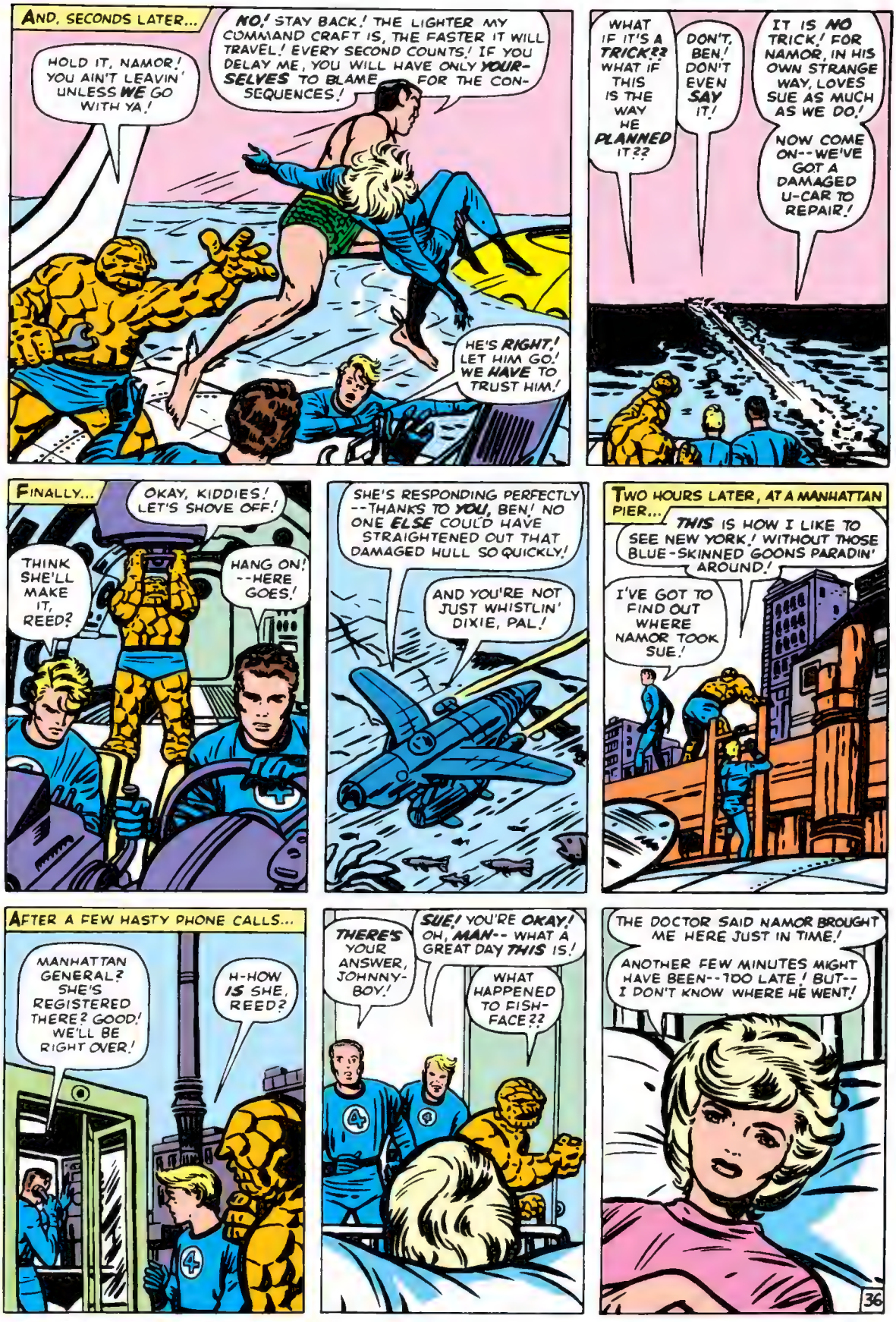
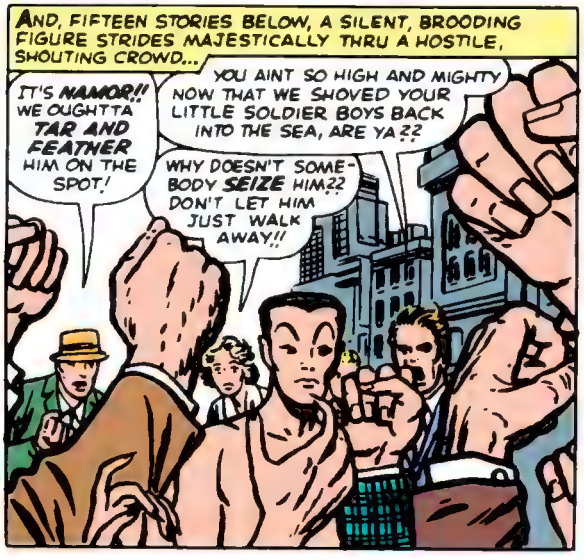
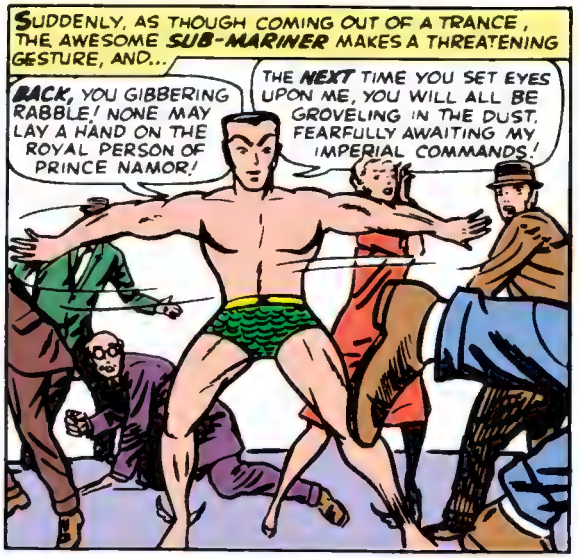

NAMOR, IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO SUE, THERE'LL BE NO PLACE ON LAND OR SEA WHERE YOU'LL BE SAFE FROM ME!!
QUIET! MUST THINK!
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT CAN REACH SHORE IN TIME--MY IMPERIAL COMMAND CRAFT!
REED! GRAB 'IM! HE'S TRYIN' TO ESCAPE!
NO, BEN--NOT THIS TIME!
MOVING LIKE A MAN POSSESSED, THE MIGHTY LORD OF THE DEEP PLUNGES ONCE AGAIN INTO HIS WATERY DOMAIN...
..REACHING HIS OBJECTIVE WITHIN SECONDS!
THEY HAVE REPAIRED A BROKEN PORTHOLE! THAT MUST BE HOW SUE LEFT THE CRAFT!
STAND ASIDE--ALL OF YOU! NAMOR IS HERE!
DORMA! KRANG! QUICKLY, LEAVE THE SHIP! TAKE THE CREW WITH YOU! I WANT NO MORE WEIGHT THAN IS ABSOLUTE NECESSARY! NOW GO!
YOUR MAJESTY, EVEN A KING CANNOT SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT! DO YOU FORGET MY OWN ROYAL LINEAGE?
BY YOUR LEAVE, MAJESTY, MAY WE HAVE SOME EXPLANATION? AS WARLORD OF ATLANTIS, I AM ENTITLED TO KNOW YOUR BATTLE PLANS!
THIS DOES NOT CONCERN BATTLE PLANS! THE SURFACE GIRL IS DYING--I MUST GET HER TO A HOSPITAL WITHIN MINUTES! NO MORE TIME FOR TALK! YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS!
THE SURFACE GIRL!! YOU ORDER US OUT OF THE IMPERIAL CRAFT IN ORDER TO SAVE AN ENEMY!!
I KNEW IT!! YOU ARE IN LOVE WITH HER! SHE HAS BEWITCHED YOU! BUT NOT EVEN A PRINCE OF THE BLOOD MAY BETRAY HIS PEOPLE LIKE THIS!
SILENCE, DORMA! I CLAIM IMPERIAL PRIVILEGE AS IS MY RIGHT!
AND SO, LEAVING THE OTHERS BEHIND WITH AN AUXILIARY LIFE-CRAFT, THE LORD OF ATLANTIS TAKES SOLE COMMAND OF THE POWERFUL SHIP!
35

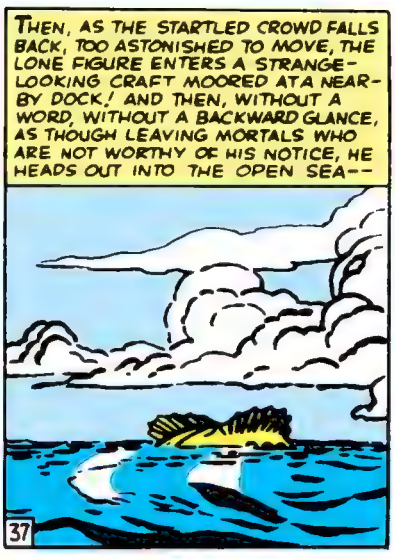

AND, SECONDS LATER...
HOLD IT, NAMOR! YOU AIN'T LEAVIN' UNLESS WE GO WITH YA!
NO! STAY BACK! THE LIGHTER MY COMMAND CRAFT IS, THE FASTER IT WILL TRAVEL! EVERY SECOND COUNTS! IF YOU DELAY ME, YOU WILL HAVE ONLY YOURSELVES TO BLAME FOR THE CONSEQUENCES!
HE'S RIGHT! LET HIM GO! WE HAVE TO TRUST HIM!
WHAT IF IT'S A TRICK?? WHAT IF THIS IS THE WAY HE PLANNED IT??
DON'T, BEN! DON'T EVEN SAY IT!
IT IS NO TRICK! FOR NAMOR, IN HIS OWN STRANGE WAY, LOVES SUE AS MUCH AS WE DO!
NOW COME ON--WE'VE GOT A DAMAGED U-CAR TO REPAIR!
FINALLY...
OKAY, KIDDIES! LET'S SHOVE OFF!
THINK SHE'LL MAKE IT, REED?
HANG ON! --HERE GOES!
SHE'S RESPONDING PERFECTLY --THANKS TO YOU, BEN! NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE STRAIGHTENED OUT THAT DAMAGED HULL SO QUICKLY!
AND YOU'RE NOT JUST WHISTLIN' DIXIE, PAL!
TWO HOURS LATER, AT A MANHATTAN PIER...
THIS IS HOW I LIKE TO SEE NEW YORK! WITHOUT THOSE BLUE-SKINNED GOONS PARADIN' AROUND!
I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHERE NAMOR TOOK SUE!
AFTER A FEW HASTY PHONE CALLS...
MANHATTAN GENERAL? SHE'S REGISTERED THERE? GOOD! WE'LL BE RIGHT OVER!
H-HOW IS SHE, REED?
THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, JOHNNY-BOY!
SUE! YOU'RE OKAY! OH, MAN-- WHAT A GREAT DAY THIS IS!
WHAT HAPPENED TO FISH-FACE??
THE DOCTOR SAID NAMOR BROUGHT ME HERE JUST IN TIME!
ANOTHER FEW MINUTES MIGHT HAVE BEEN--TOO LATE! BUT-- I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE WENT!
36

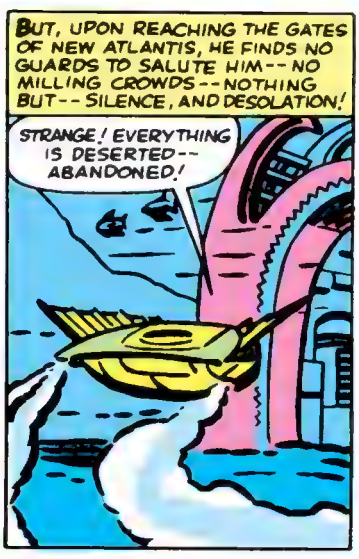
SUE, DARLING-- DON'T WORRY ABOUT NAMOR! THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
REED-- I HAVE SO MUCH-- TO MAKE UP TO YOU FOR--
THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD TIME FOR ME TO CUT OUT! HEY, WHAT'S THAT RACKET OUTSIDE??

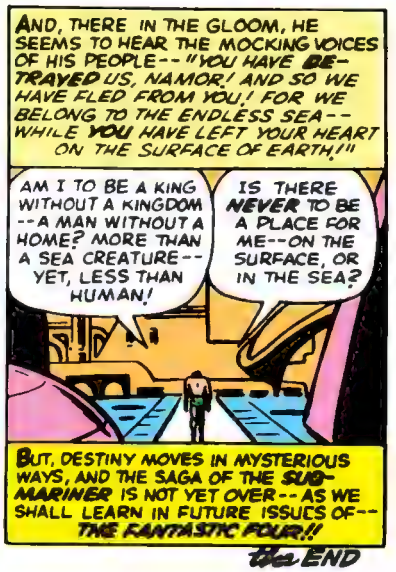
THERE'S A BIG CROWD DOWN THERE YELLIN' ABOUT SOMETHIN'! CAN'T MAKE IT OUT! MAYBE SOME BIG, BAD PUBLIC ENEMY GOT PINCHED FOR JAY-WALKIN'!
WHO CARES?!! THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT SUE IS OKAY! YIPPEE! I FEEL LIKE CELEBRATIN'!


AND, FIFTEEN STORIES BELOW, A SILENT, BROODING FIGURE STRIDES MAJESTICALLY THRU A HOSTILE, SHOUTING CROWD...
IT'S NAMOR!! WE OUGHTTA TAR AND FEATHER HIM ON THE SPOT!
YOU AINT SO HIGH AND MIGHTY NOW THAT WE SHOVED YOUR LITTLE SOLDIER BOYS BACK INTO THE SEA, ARE YA??
WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY SEIZE HIM?? DON'T LET HIM JUST WALK AWAY!!


SUDDENLY, AS THOUGH COMING OUT OF A TRANCE, THE AWESOME SUB-MARINER MAKES A THREATENING GESTURE, AND...
BACK, YOU GIBBERING RABBLE! NONE MAY LAY A HAND ON THE ROYAL PERSON OF PRINCE NAMOR!
THE NEXT TIME YOU SET EYES UPON ME, YOU WILL ALL BE GROVELING IN THE DUST, FEARFULLY AWAITING MY IMPERIAL COMMANDS!


THEN, AS THE STARTLED CROWD FALLS BACK, TOO ASTONISHED TO MOVE, THE LONE FIGURE ENTERS A STRANGE-LOOKING CRAFT MOORED AT A NEARBY DOCK! AND THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, WITHOUT A BACKWARD GLANCE, AS THOUGH LEAVING MORTALS WHO ARE NOT WORTHY OF HIS NOTICE, HE HEADS OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA--
37


BUT, UPON REACHING THE GATES OF NEW ATLANTIS, HE FINDS NO GUARDS TO SALUTE HIM-- NO MILLING CROWDS-- NOTHING BUT-- SILENCE, AND DESOLATION!
STRANGE! EVERYTHING IS DESERTED-- ABANDONED!


AND, THERE IN THE GLOOM, HE SEEMS TO HEAR THE MOCKING VOICES OF HIS PEOPLE-- "YOU HAVE BETRAYED US, NAMOR! AND SO WE HAVE FLED FROM YOU! FOR WE BELONG TO THE ENDLESS SEA-- WHILE YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR HEART ON THE SURFACE OF EARTH!"
AM I TO BE A KING WITHOUT A KINGDOM --A MAN WITHOUT A HOME? MORE THAN A SEA CREATURE-- YET, LESS THAN HUMAN!
IS THERE NEVER TO BE A PLACE FOR ME--ON THE SURFACE, OR IN THE SEA?
BUT, DESTINY MOVES IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS, AND THE SAGA OF THE SUB-MARINER IS NOT YET OVER-- AS WE SHALL LEARN IN FUTURE ISSUES OF-- THE FANTASTIC FOUR!!
the END

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

THE MOLE MAN

FROM F.F. #1 NOV.

THE MOLE MAN! NEARLY BLIND INHABITANT OF THE NETHER REGIONS OF EARTH! USING HIS STRANGE "RADAR-SENSE" INSTEAD OF EYESIGHT, AIDED BY AN AWESOME GROUP OF UNDEREARTH MONSTERS, THIS BITTER, BROODING MAN YEARS AGO LEFT EARTH'S SURFACE BECAUSE OF HIS HATRED FOR MANKIND, AND SET UP AN UNDERGROUND EMPIRE OVER WHICH HE RULED WITH TYRANNICAL POWER... UNTIL THE FANTASTIC FOUR PUT AN END TO HIS SAVAGE DREAM OF CONQUERING THE SURFACE OF EARTH!

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

THE SKRULLS FROM OUTER SPACE!

FROM F.F. #2 JAN.

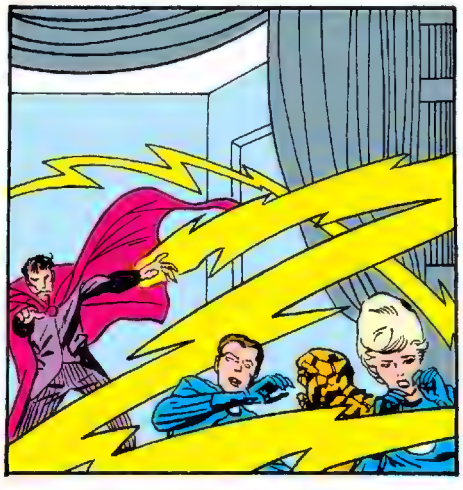
THEY CALLED THEMSELVES SKRULLS! BUT, BY ANY NAME, THEY WERE A BAND OF THE MOST DANGEROUS MENACES EARTH HAD EVER FACED! ABLE TO CHANGE THEIR APPEARANCES AT WILL, THEY TOOK THE IDENTITIES OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, AND ALMOST SUCCEEDED IN PUTTING THE BLAME FOR THEIR OWN MISDEEDS ON THE COLORFUL QUARTET! BUT THEY LEARNED, IN TIME, THAT IT TAKES MORE THAN EXPERT MIMICRY TO TURN A GROUP OF AMAZING ALIENS INTO AMERICA'S GREATEST HEROES!

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

the MIRACLE MAN

FROM F.F. # 3 MAR.

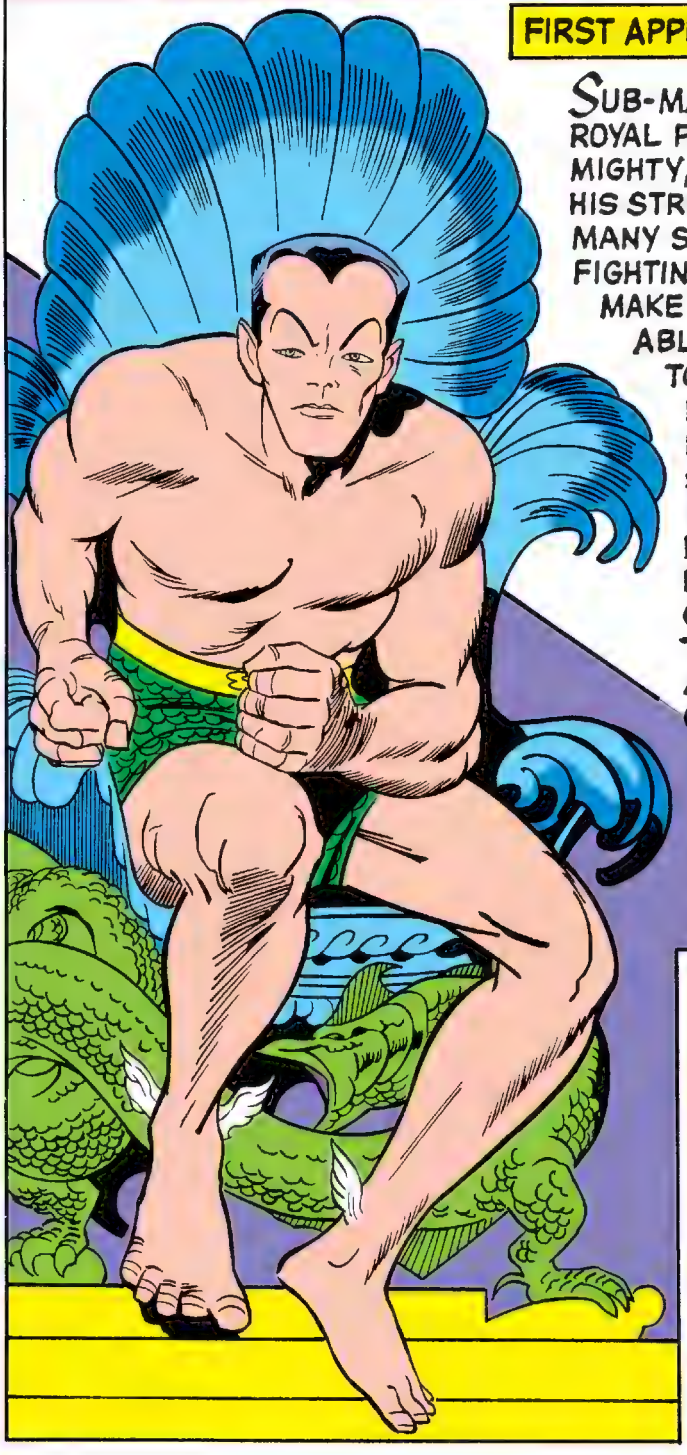
HOW DO YOU FIGHT A MAN WHO CAN ACCOMPLISH MIRACLES! THAT WAS THE PROBLEM WHICH CONFRONTED THE FANTASTIC FOUR WHEN THEY FACED THE THREAT OF THE MIRACLE MAN! HE SEEMED STRONGER THAN THE THING, MORE BRILLIANT THAN MISTER FANTASTIC, MORE POWERFUL THAN THE HUMAN TORCH, AND MORE ELUSIVE THAN THE INVISIBLE GIRL! YET, OUR COLORFUL COMBO WERE TO FINALLY LEARN THAT EVEN MIRACLES ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM... NOT WHEN THEY ARE PRODUCED BY A MASTER HYPNOTIST!



A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

PRINCE NAMOR, THE SENSATIONAL SUB-MARINER

FIRST APPEARED IN F.F. # 4 MAY



SUB-MARINER! RULER OF THE SEAS! ROYAL PRINCE-OF-THE-BLOOD OF A MIGHTY, ALMOST LEGENDARY RACE! HIS STRENGTH IS THE STRENGTH OF MANY SURFACE-MEN, AND HIS FIGHTING HEART AND RAW COURAGE MAKE HIM AN INDOMITABLE FOE! ABLE TO BREATHE UNDER WATER, TO WITHSTAND THE CRUSHING PRESSURE OF THE OCEAN'S DEPTHS... ABLE TO FLY FOR SHORT DISTANCES AIDED BY HIS WINGED FEET... POSSESSING THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF ALL THE UNDERSEA CREATURES, PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, IS THE MOST TALKED-ABOUT, MOST COLORFUL HERO-VILLAIN IN ALL OF COMICDOM TODAY!

QUESTIONS and

ON THESE PAGES WE SHALL ENDEAVOR TO ANSWER MANY OF THE MOST-ASKED

REED RICHARDS, "MISTER FANTASTIC"

FAVORITE HOBBIES: *SCIENCE, INVENTING, CRIME DEDUCTION.*

Q: WHY IS MR. FANTASTIC'S HAIR WHITE AT THE TEMPLES? IS HE OLDER THAN HE LOOKS?

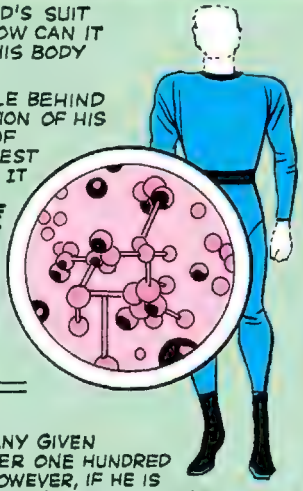
A: NO! IT TURNED WHITE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR WHEN HE AIDED ALLIED PRISONERS TO ESCAPE FROM THE NAZIS.

Q: DOES IT HURT HIM TO STRETCH HIS BODY?

A: NO! ONLY IF HE TRIES TO STRETCH BEYOND HIS NORMAL LIMITS.

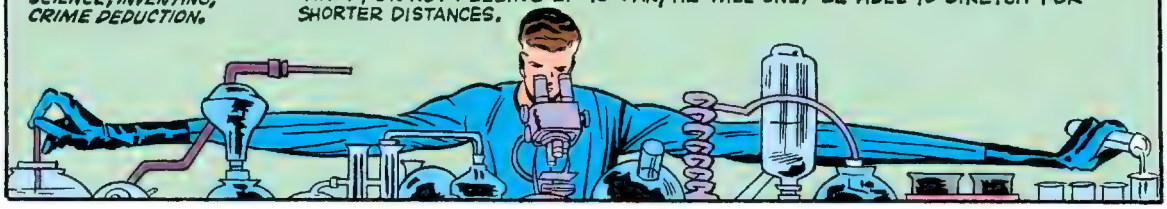
Q: WHAT IS REED'S SUIT MADE OF? HOW CAN IT STRETCH AS HIS BODY DOES?

A: THE PRINCIPLE BEHIND THE COMPOSITION OF HIS SUIT IS ONE OF REED'S GREATEST DISCOVERIES. IT IS COMPOSED OF ***UNSTABLE MOLECULES*** WHICH EXACTLY FOLLOW THE POSITION OF HIS BODY!



Q: WHAT *IS* HIS NORMAL LIMIT?

A: IT DEPENDS UPON HIS PHYSICAL CONDITION AT ANY GIVEN TIME. WHEN IN TOP SHAPE, HE CAN STRETCH OVER ONE HUNDRED YARDS BEFORE IT BEGINS TO GROW PAINFUL. HOWEVER, IF HE IS TIRED, OR NOT FEELING UP TO PAR, HE WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO STRETCH FOR SHORTER DISTANCES.



Q: HOW OLD IS JOHNNY?

A: SIXTEEN.

Q: WHAT GRADE IN SCHOOL IS HE?

A: SENIOR YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL.

Q: HAS HE A STEADY GIRL FRIEND?

A: NOT YET. HE ENJOYS "PLAYING THE FIELD" TOO MUCH.

Q: DOES IT HURT HIM TO FLAME ON?

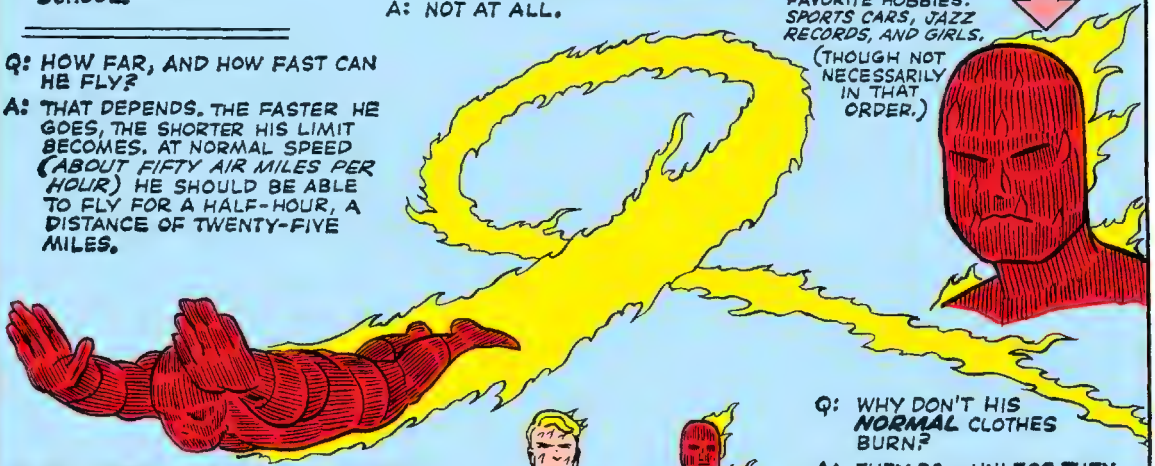
A: NOT AT ALL.

JOHNNY STORM, "THE HUMAN TORCH"

FAVORITE HOBBIES: *SPORTS CARS, JAZZ RECORDS, AND GIRLS.* (THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER.)

Q: HOW FAR, AND HOW FAST CAN HE FLY?

A: THAT DEPENDS. THE FASTER HE GOES, THE SHORTER HIS LIMIT BECOMES. AT NORMAL SPEED (*ABOUT FIFTY AIR MILES PER HOUR*) HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FLY FOR A HALF-HOUR, A DISTANCE OF TWENTY-FIVE MILES.



Q: WHY DOESN'T THE TORCH'S UNIFORM BURN UP WHEN HE FLAMES ON? HOW DOES IT REAPPEAR WHEN HE FLAMES OFF?

A: DESIGNED BY MR. FANTASTIC, OF UNSTABLE MOLECULES, TORCH'S UNIFORM UNITES WITH THE FLAME UNTIL HE FLAMES OFF, AT WHICH TIME IT DRAPES HIS BODY AGAIN LIKE NORMAL CLOTH.

Q: WHY DON'T HIS ***NORMAL*** CLOTHES BURN?

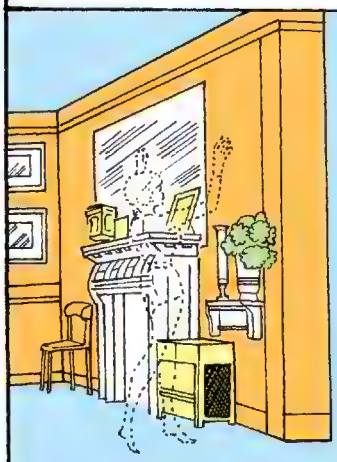
A: THEY DO--UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIALLY MADE OF UNSTABLE MOLECULES.

Q: DOES HE REALLY HATE THE ***THING***?

A: HE'D RISK HIS LIFE FOR HIM WITHOUT QUESTION!

ANSWERS ABOUT THE FANTASTIC FOUR

QUESTIONS WHICH YOU READERS HAVE SENT US CONCERNING THE FANTASTIC FOUR!



Q: WHY CAN'T SUE WALK THRU WALLS WHEN SHE IS INVISIBLE?

A: JUST BECAUSE WE CAN'T SEE HER, THAT DOESN'T MEAN SHE ISN'T THERE! HER BODY, THOUGH INVISIBLE, STILL REMAINS SOLID AND SUBJECT TO ALL PHYSICAL LAWS.

SUE STORM, "THE INVISIBLE GIRL"

FAVORITE HOBBIES: *FASHIONS, COOKING, COSMETICS, AND READING ROMANTIC NOVELS.*

Q: HOW DOES HER COSTUME TURN INVISIBLE WITH HER?

A: YOU'VE PROBABLY GUESSED IT BY NOW! THOSE WONDERFUL LITTLE UNSTABLE MOLECULES OF REED'S!

Q: CAN SUE MAKE ANY PART OF HER BODY INVISIBLE WHILE THE REST OF HER REMAINS VISIBLE?

A: YES... BY MENTAL CONTROL.

Q: IF SHE MARRIES, WOULD SHE LEAVE THE F.F.?

A: YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS OURS. IT WILL PROBABLY DEPEND UPON WHOM SHE MARRIES!

Q: WHO DOES SHE REALLY LOVE? REED, OR SUB-MARINER?

A: WE, OURSELVES, ARE HONESTLY NOT SURE! NO ONE CAN REALLY LOOK INTO THE HEART OF A FEMALE, AND WE SUSPECT THAT SHE HERSELF ISN'T CERTAIN!

BEN GRIMM, "THE THING"

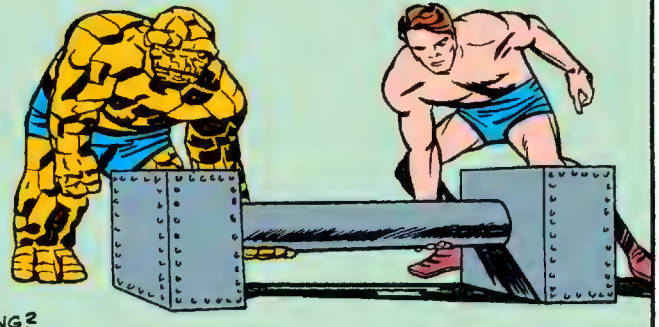
FAVORITE HOBBIES: *WEIGHT-LIFTING... READING ADVENTURE STORIES... WISE-CRACKING!*

Q: WHEN THE THING TURNS INTO BEN GRIMM, DOES HE RETAIN HIS TREMENDOUS STRENGTH?

A: NO! AS BEN GRIMM, HE IS A NORMALLY STRONG ATHLETIC MAN! BUT, WHEN HE BECOMES THE THING, HIS NORMAL STRENGTH IS INCREASED TO AN ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE DEGREE!

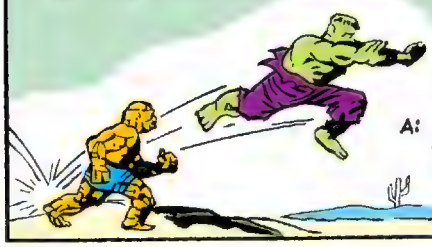
Q: IS HE REALLY AS BAD-TEMPERED AS HE SOUNDS?

A: ALL WE CAN SAY IS: IF *YOU* LOOKED LIKE THE THING, WHAT KIND OF DISPOSITION DO YOU THINK *YOU'D* HAVE?



Q: WHO IS STRONGER--THE HULK OR THE THING?

A: ALTHOUGH THE THING WOULD ANGRILY DENY IT, WE FEEL THE HULK IS ACTUALLY STRONGER! THAT IS ONE REASON HE CAN TAKE ENORMOUS LEAPS INTO THE AIR...BECAUSE OF HIS INCREDIBLE LEG MUSCLES! BUT, THE THING IS MORE AGILE, FASTER-MOVING, AND QUICKER-THINKING IN A FIGHT!

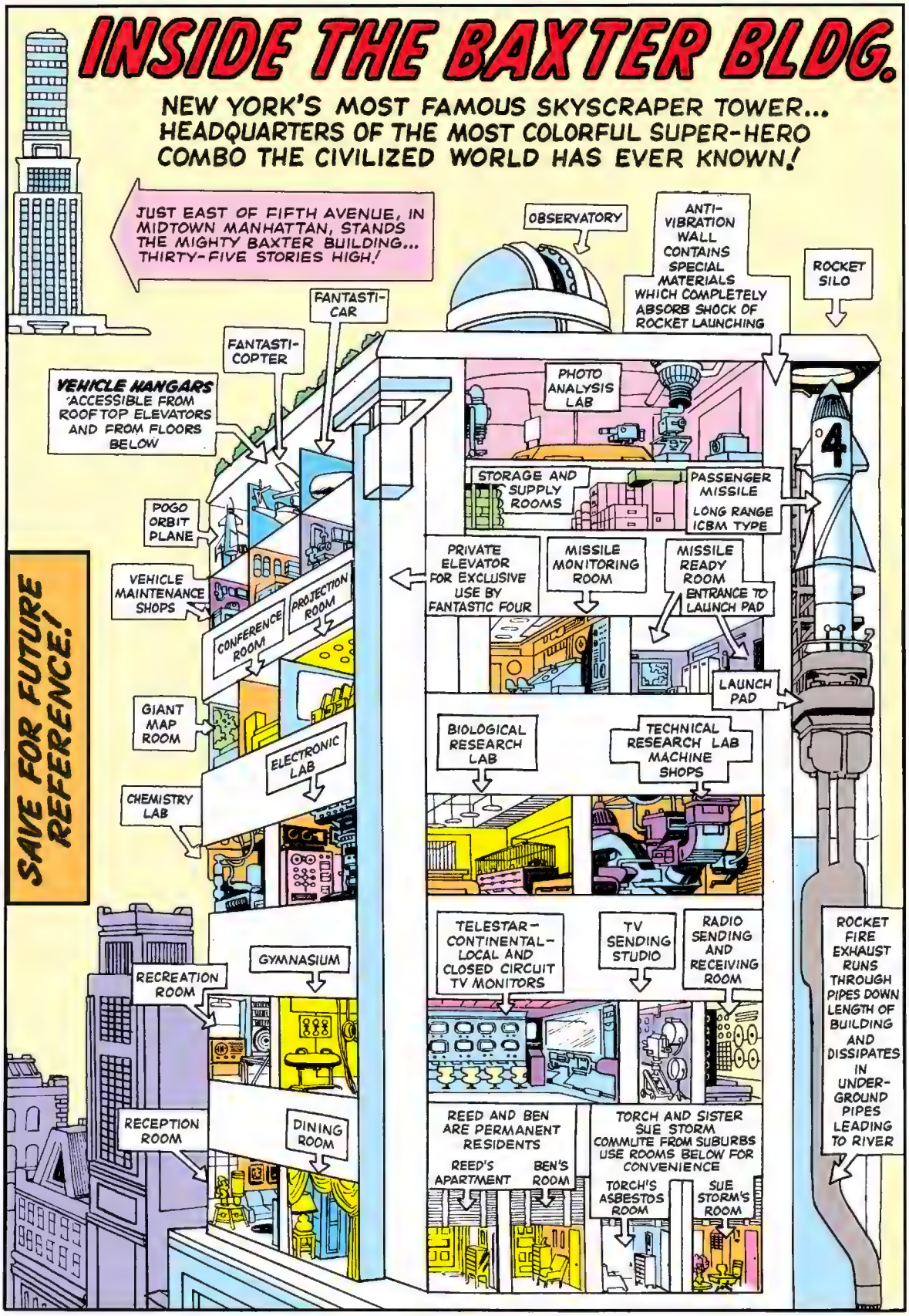


Q: WHY DOES THE THING ONLY HAVE FOUR FINGERS AND THREE TOES?

A: NO ONE KNOWS! IT'S JUST THE WAY THE UNPREDICTABLE COSMIC RAYS AFFECTED HIM!

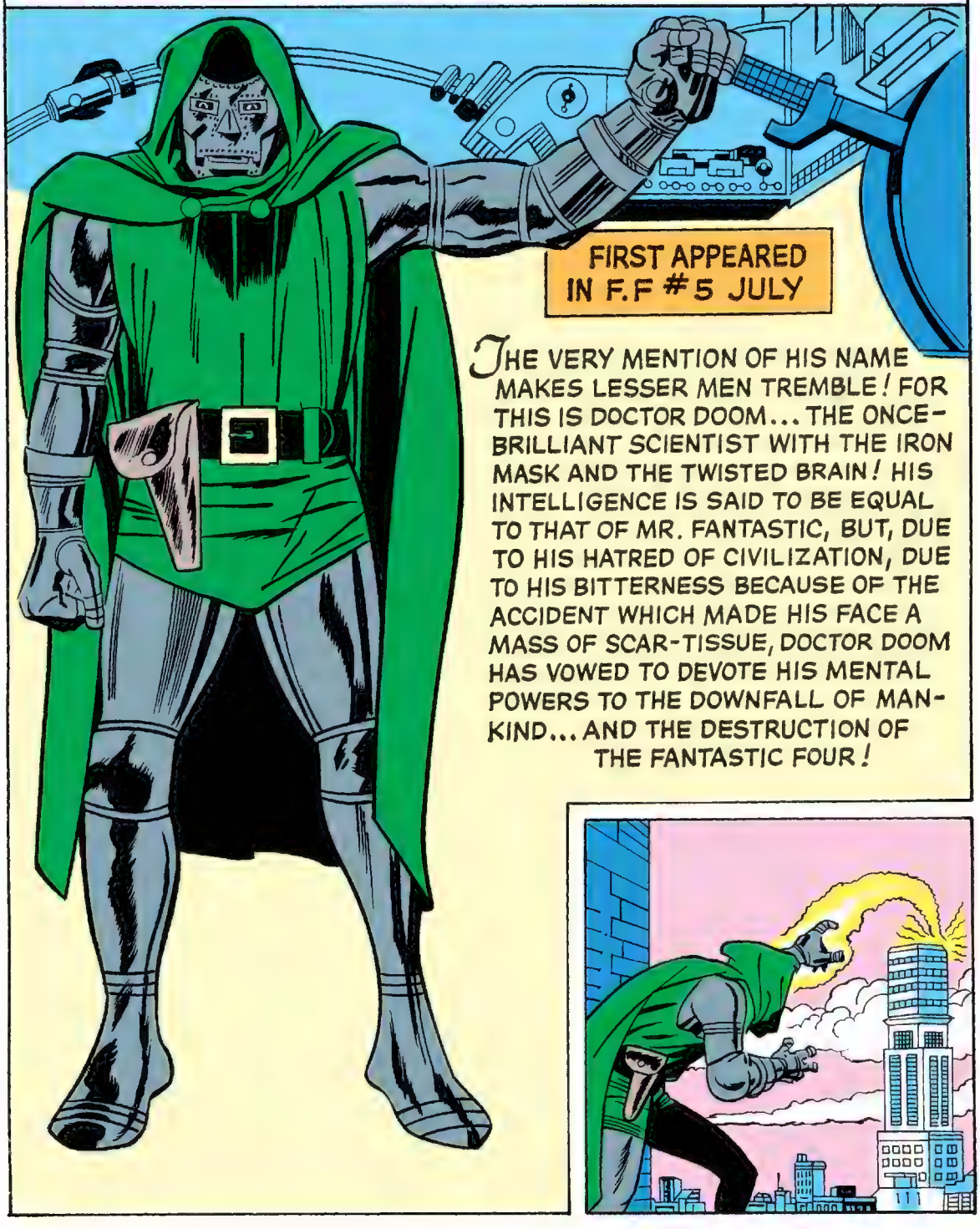
Q: WILL THE THING MARRY ALICIA?

A: THE MIGHTY, FEARLESS THING IS TOO FRIGHTENED TO PROPOSE! ONLY TIME WILL TELL!


INSIDE THE BAXTER BLDG.
NEW YORK'S MOST FAMOUS SKYSCRAPER TOWER... HEADQUARTERS OF THE MOST COLORFUL SUPER-HERO COMBO THE CIVILIZED WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN!
JUST EAST OF FIFTH AVENUE, IN MIDTOWN MANHATTAN, STANDS THE MIGHTY BAXTER BUILDING... THIRTY-FIVE STORIES HIGH!
OBSERVATORY
ANTI-VIBRATION WALL CONTAINS SPECIAL MATERIALS WHICH COMPLETELY ABSORB SHOCK OF ROCKET LAUNCHING
ROCKET SILO
FANTASTI-CAR
FANTASTI-COPTER
VEHICLE HANGARS ACCESSIBLE FROM ROOF TOP ELEVATORS AND FROM FLOORS BELOW
PHOTO ANALYSIS LAB
STORAGE AND SUPPLY ROOMS
PASSENGER MISSILE LONG RANGE ICBM TYPE
POGO ORBIT PLANE
PRIVATE ELEVATOR FOR EXCLUSIVE USE BY FANTASTIC FOUR
MISSILE MONITORING ROOM
MISSILE READY ROOM ENTRANCE TO LAUNCH PAD
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE SHOPS
CONFERENCE ROOM
PROJECTION ROOM
LAUNCH PAD
GIANT MAP ROOM
ELECTRONIC LAB
BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH LAB
TECHNICAL RESEARCH LAB MACHINE SHOPS
CHEMISTRY LAB
SAVE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE!
TELESTAR-CONTINENTAL-LOCAL AND CLOSED CIRCUIT TV MONITORS
TV SENDING STUDIO
RADIO SENDING AND RECEIVING ROOM
GYMNASIUM
RECREATION ROOM
ROCKET FIRE EXHAUST RUNS THROUGH PIPES DOWN LENGTH OF BUILDING AND DISSIPATES IN UNDER-GROUND PIPES LEADING TO RIVER
RECEPTION ROOM
DINING ROOM
REED AND BEN ARE PERMANENT RESIDENTS
REED'S APARTMENT
BEN'S ROOM
TORCH AND SISTER SUE STORM COMMUTE FROM SUBURBS USE ROOMS BELOW FOR CONVENIENCE
TORCH'S ASBESTOS ROOM
SUE STORM'S ROOM

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

DOCTOR DOOM

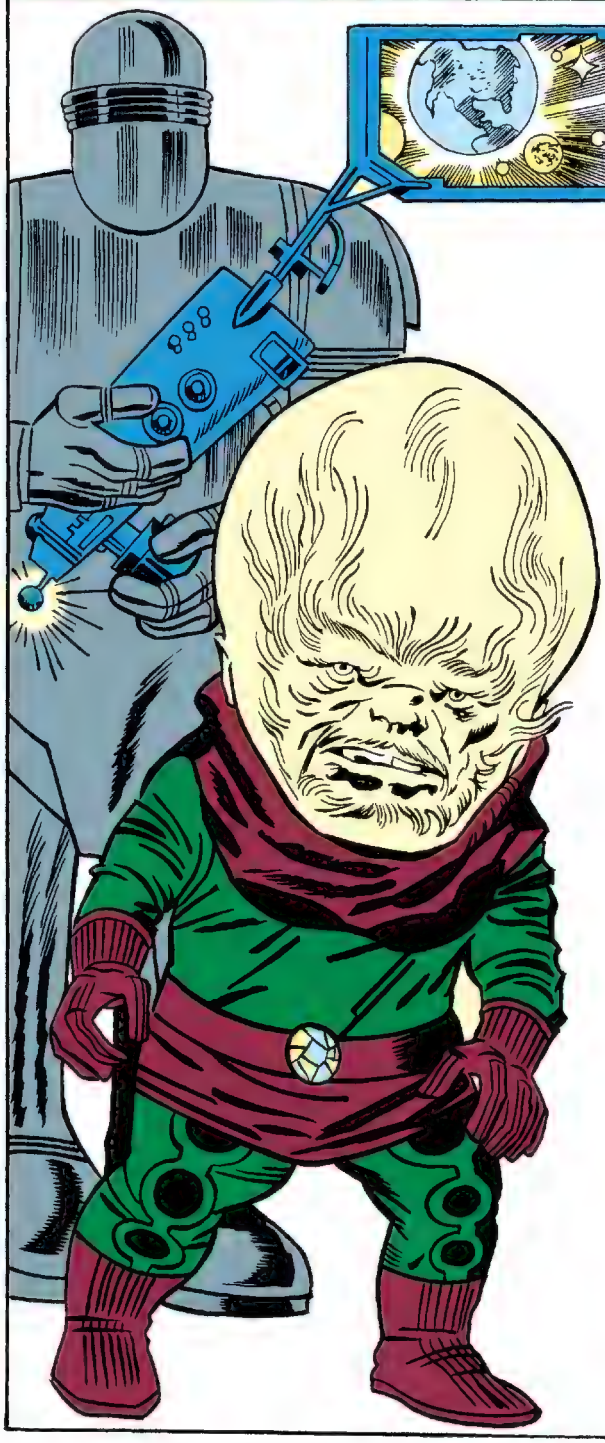


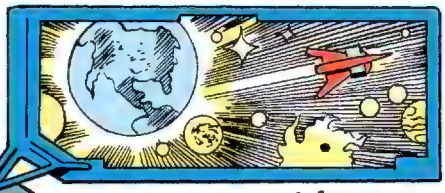
FIRST APPEARED IN F.F #5 JULY

THE VERY MENTION OF HIS NAME MAKES LESSER MEN TREMBLE! FOR THIS IS DOCTOR DOOM... THE ONCE-BRILLIANT SCIENTIST WITH THE IRON MASK AND THE TWISTED BRAIN! HIS INTELLIGENCE IS SAID TO BE EQUAL TO THAT OF MR. FANTASTIC, BUT, DUE TO HIS HATRED OF CIVILIZATION, DUE TO HIS BITTERNESS BECAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT WHICH MADE HIS FACE A MASS OF SCAR-TISSUE, DOCTOR DOOM HAS VOWED TO DEVOTE HIS MENTAL POWERS TO THE DOWNFALL OF MANKIND... AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

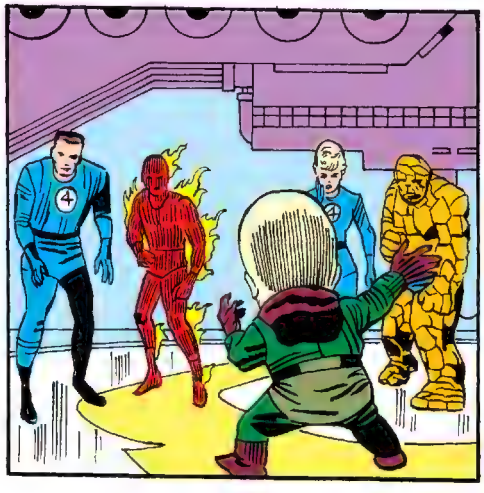
KURRGO MASTER of PLANET X





FROM F.F. # 7 OCT.

USING A MENTALLY-CONTROLLED ROBOT, THIS UNEARTHLY RULER OF A SUBJUGATED PLANET CAUSED THE PEOPLE OF EARTH TO TURN AGAINST THE FANTASTIC FOUR! NOT UNTIL THE DESPERATE QUARTET ACTUALLY SET FOOT UPON THE STRANGE WORLD OF PLANET X DID THEY REALIZE WHAT A DREAD CHALLENGE THEY FACED! BUT BEFORE THEY RETURNED TO EARTH, PLANET X WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED, AND KURRGO SLAIN BY THE VERY FORCE WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD FINISH THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

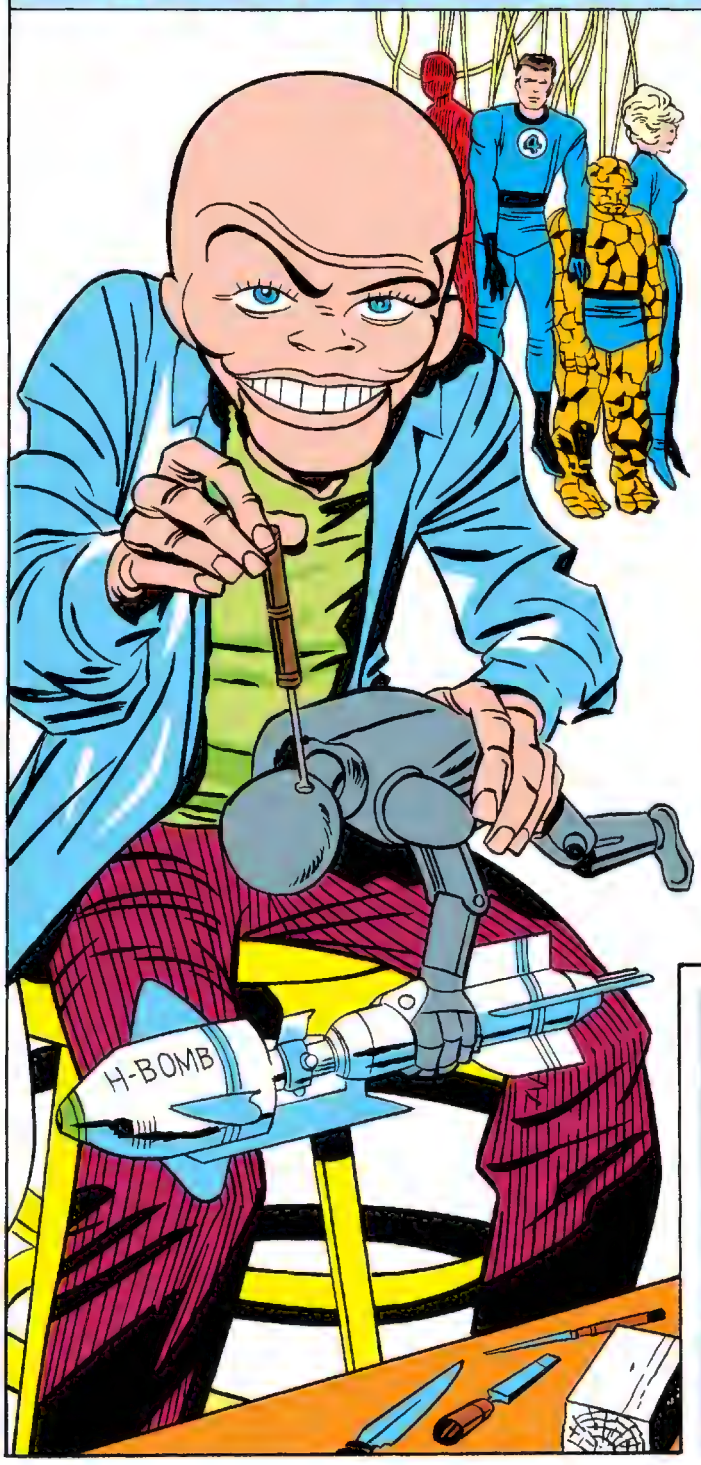


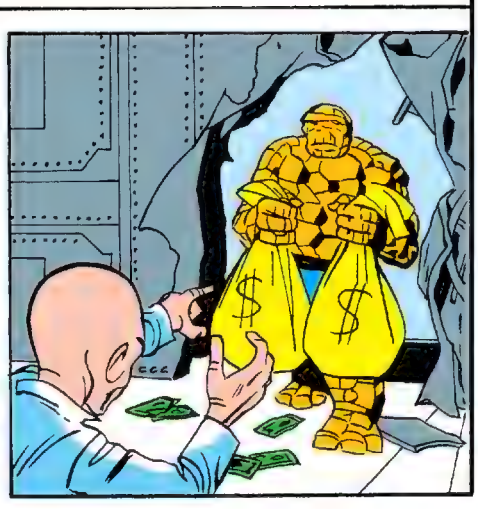
A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

The PUPPET MASTER

FIRST APPEARED IN F.F. # 8 NOV.

STEP-FATHER OF THE LOVELY, BLIND ALICIA, THIS SINISTER FIGURE POSSESSES A POWER WHICH SEEMS TO SURPASS EVEN THAT OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR! USING A UNIQUE FORM OF RADIO-ACTIVE MODELLING CLAY, HE CAN FASHION PUPPETS WHICH SOMEHOW CONTROL THE LIVING PERSONS THEY ARE MODELED AFTER! TWICE HE HAS COME WITHIN A HAIRSBREADTH OF DEFEATING THE FANTASTIC FOUR... AS ALL OF FANDOM WONDERS... WILL THERE BE A THIRD TIME? AND IF SO, WILL THE NEXT VICTORY BELONG TO-- THE PUPPET MASTER?



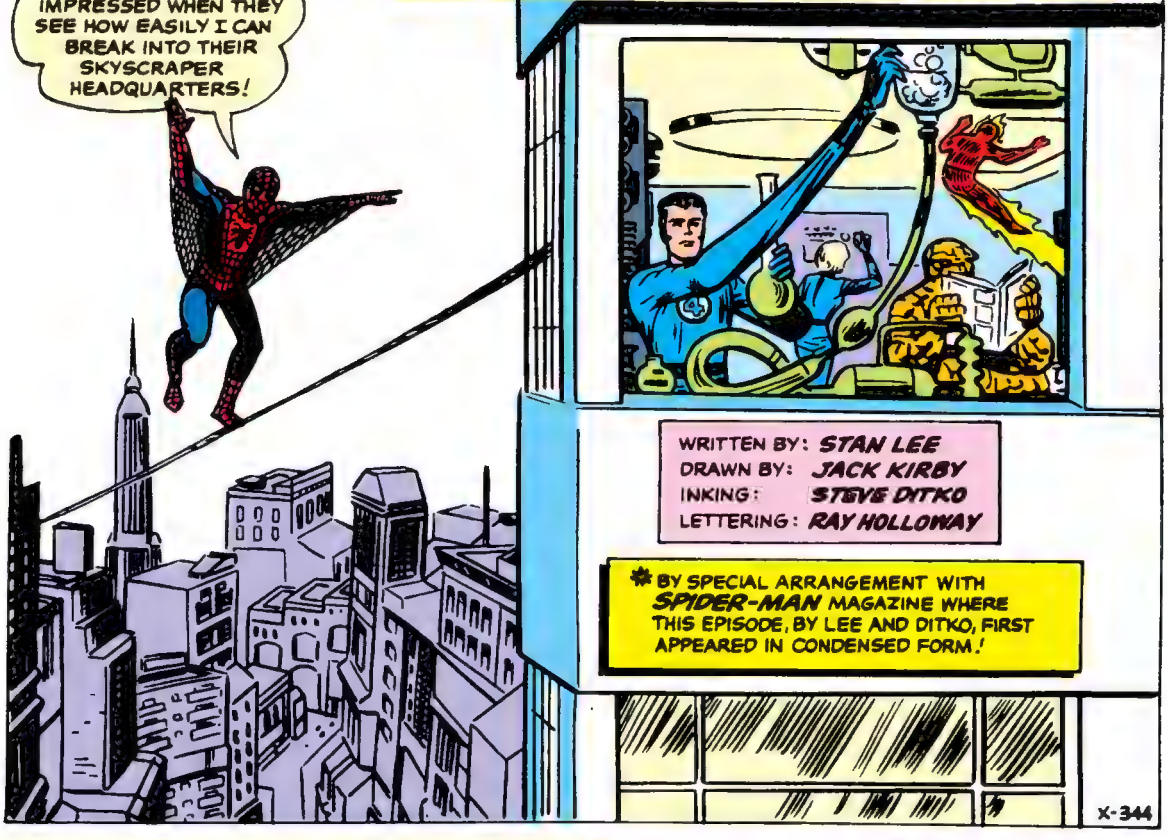


THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR MEET SPIDER-MAN!*

I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THIS *LONG* AGO! I CAN PROBABLY EARN A *FORTUNE* BY JOINING FORCES WITH THE *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

THEY'LL BE REAL IMPRESSED WHEN THEY SEE HOW EASILY I CAN BREAK INTO THEIR SKYSCRAPER HEADQUARTERS!

EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS MEMORABLE INCIDENT, ONE OF THE HIGH POINTS IN COMIC MAGAZINE HISTORY, FIRST OCCURRED IN "*THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN*" #1, MARCH! IT WAS MERELY A SMALL, TWO-PAGE EPISODE WHICH BEGAN ONE OF SPIDER-MAN'S GREATEST ADVENTURES! HOWEVER, WE HAVE RECEIVED COUNTLESS REQUESTS ASKING US TO RE-DO THIS FAMOUS ENCOUNTER, BUT TO DEVOTE *MORE SPACE* TO IT, SHOWING IT IN ALL ITS EXCITING DETAIL! AND SO--BECAUSE YOU REQUESTED IT...



WRITTEN BY: *STAN LEE*
DRAWN BY: *JACK KIRBY*
INKING: *STEVE DITKO*
LETTERING: *RAY HOLLOWAY*

* BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH *SPIDER-MAN* MAGAZINE WHERE THIS EPISODE, BY LEE AND DITKO, FIRST APPEARED IN CONDENSED FORM!

X-344

AT THAT MOMENT, AN ALARM RINGS IN THE READY-ROOM OF THE *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

THE *ALARM!* SOMEONE IS TRYING TO SNEAK IN!

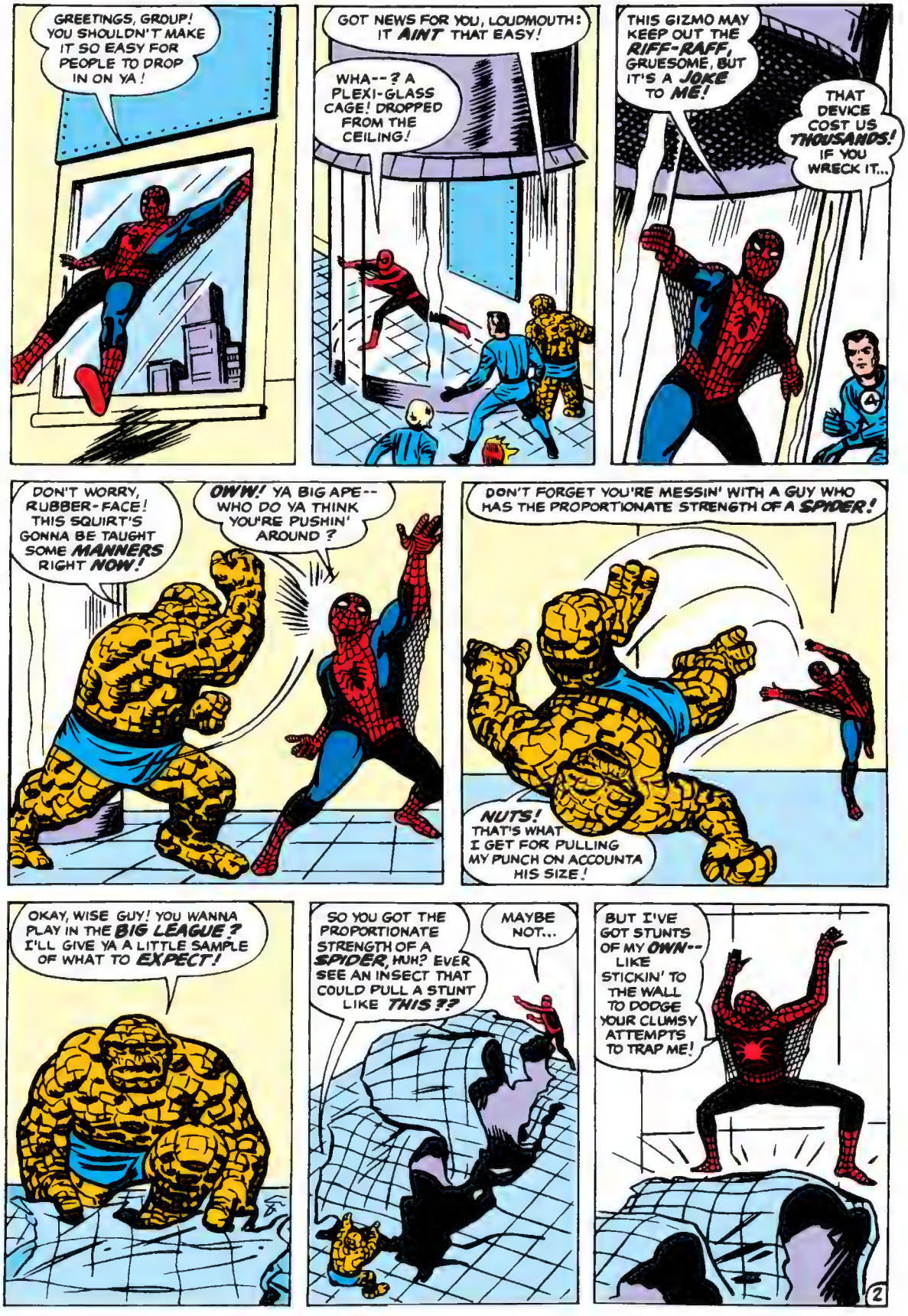
HE MUST BE SOME KINDA *NUT* TO THINK HE CAN TAKE US BY SURPRISE!

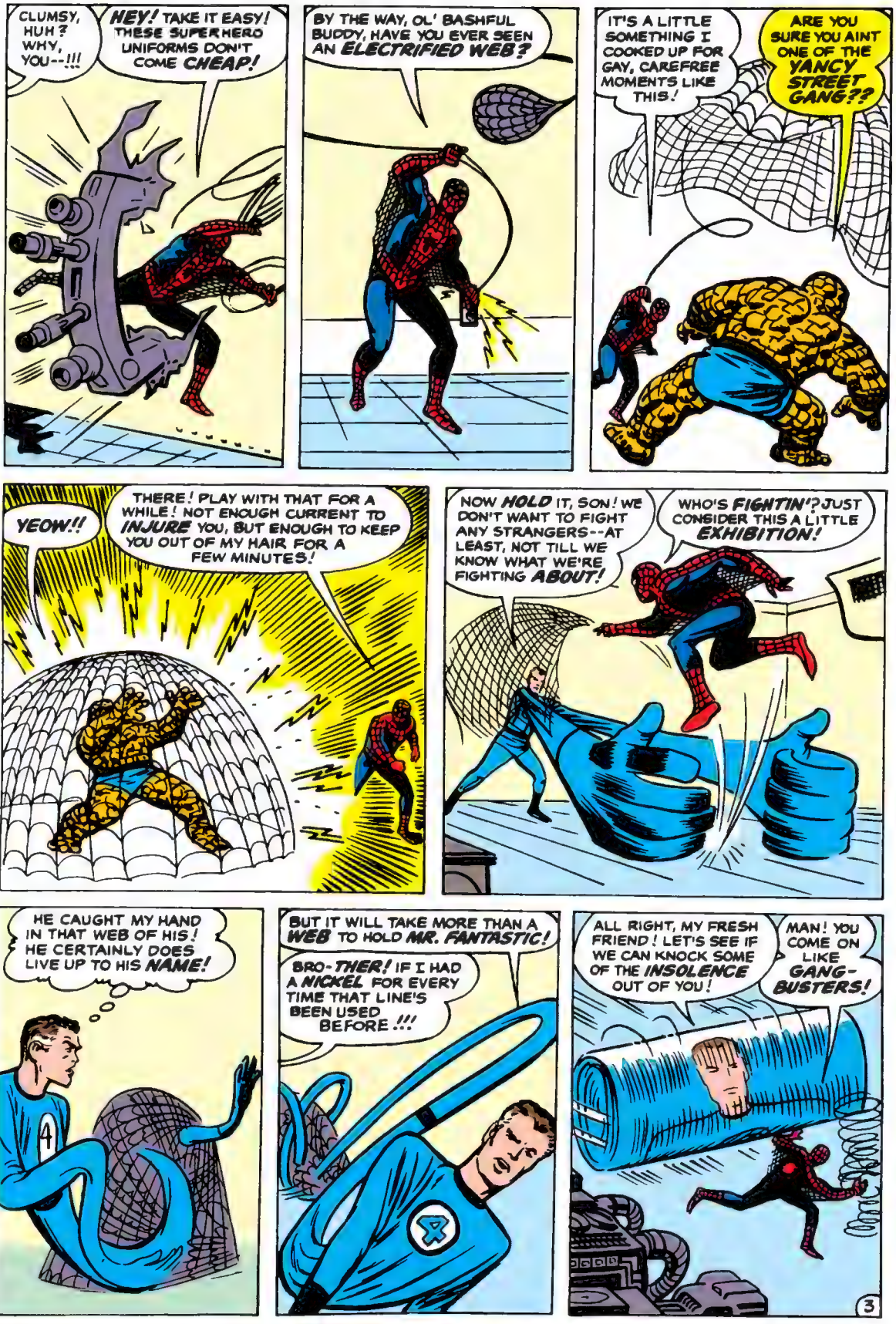
BRIN-NG

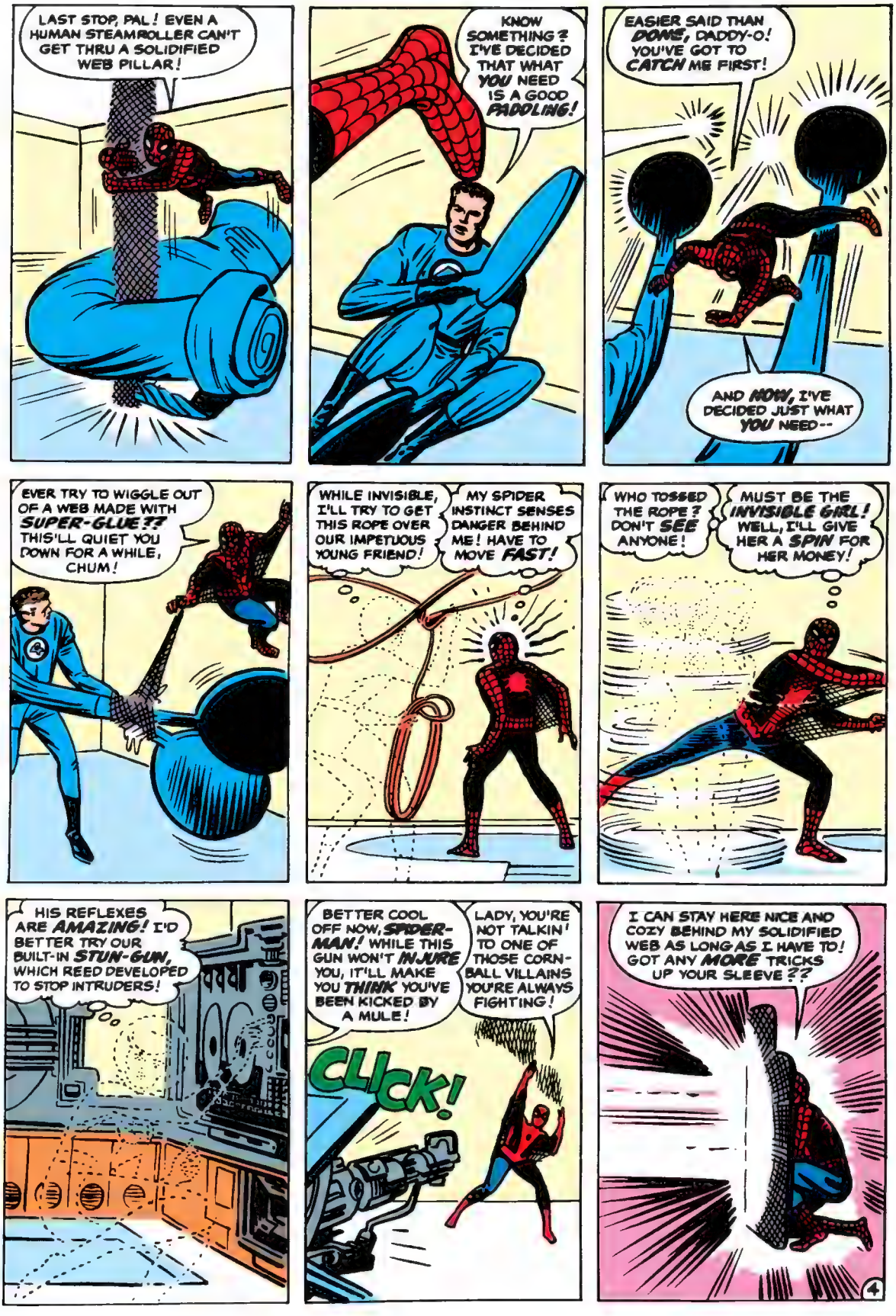
THERE'S HIS PICTURE ON OUR VIEWPLATE! IT'S *SPIDER-MAN!*

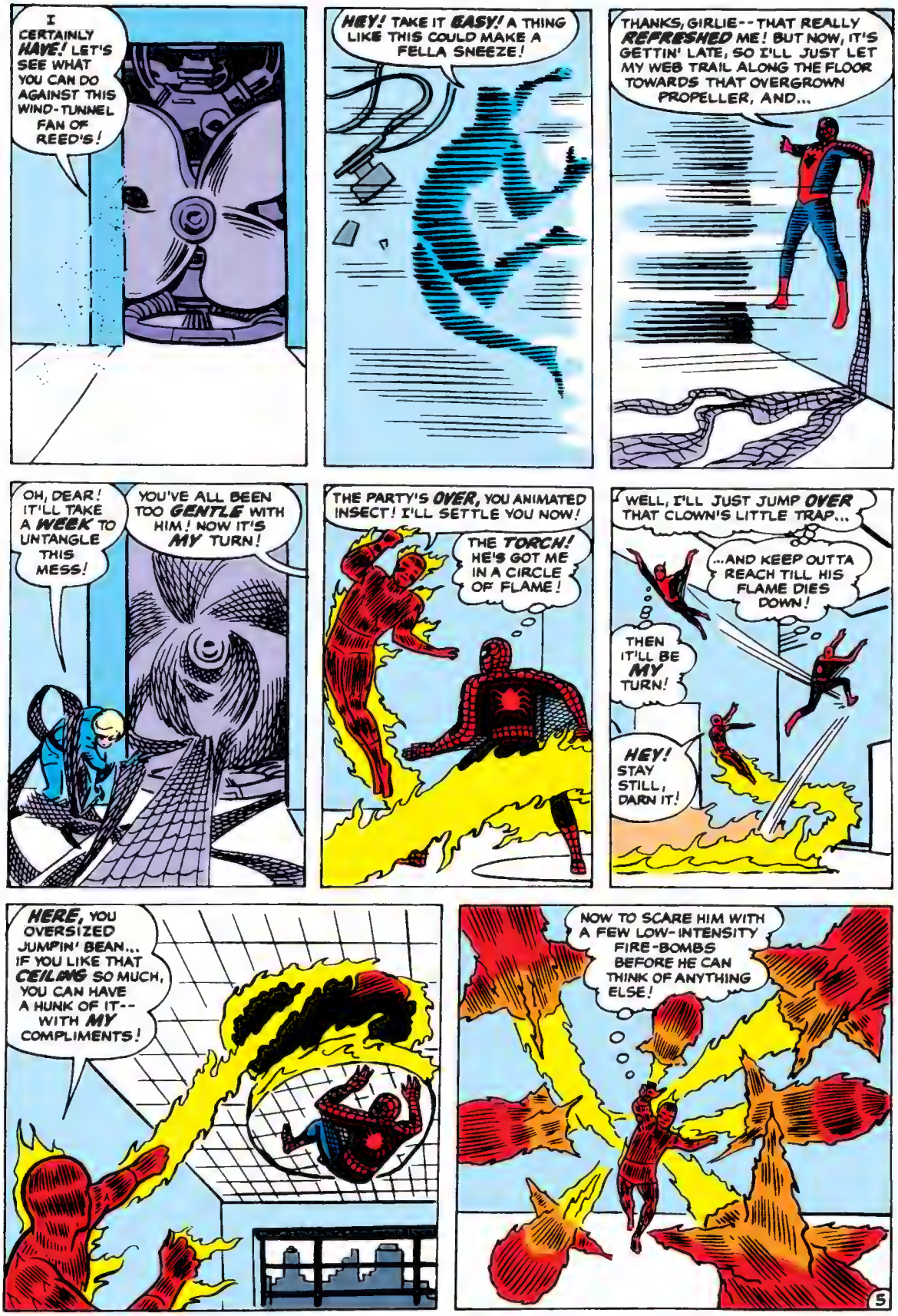
HOW OBLIGING OF THEM TO LEAVE A WINDOW OPEN FOR ME! THIS IS A *BREEZE!*

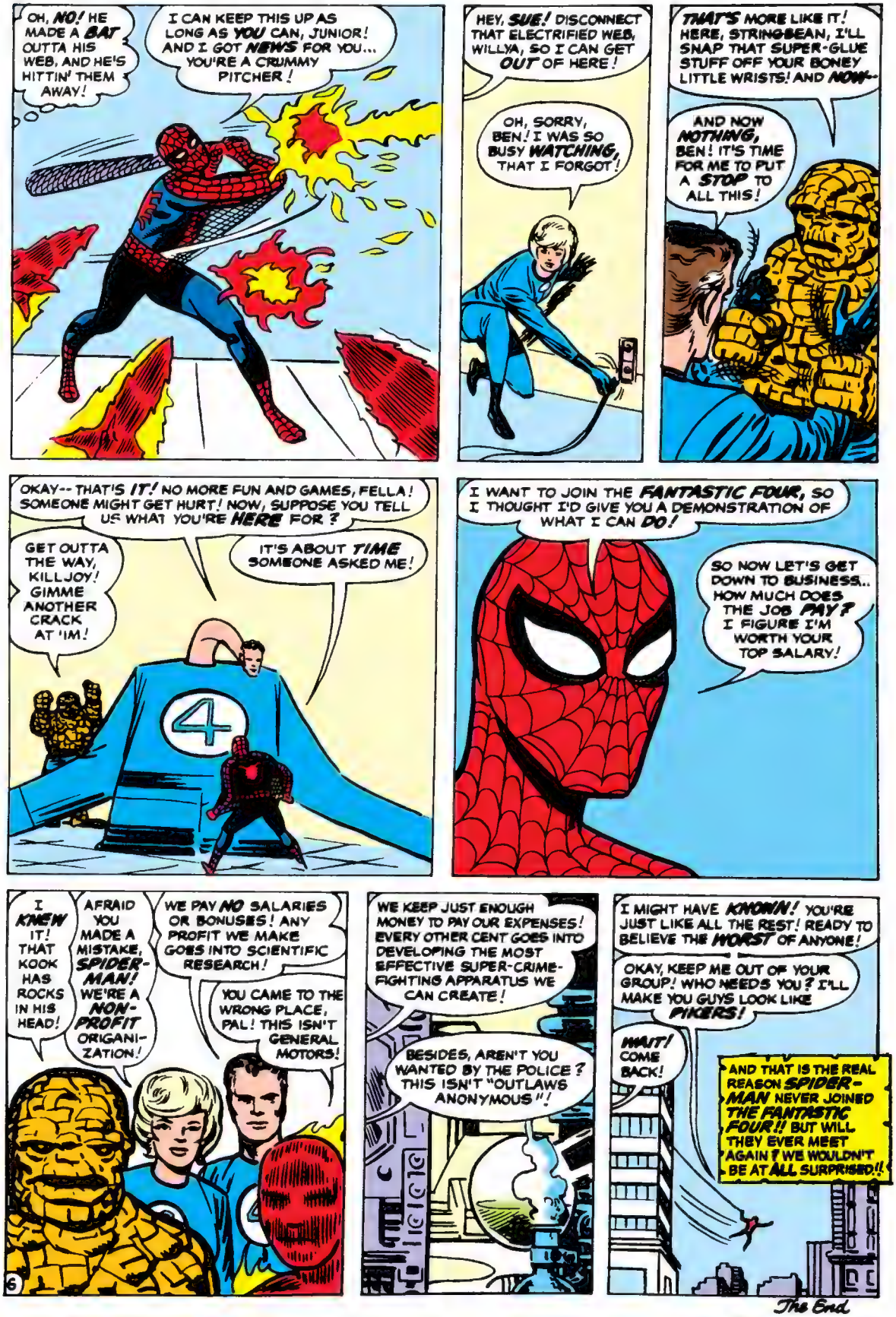
1


GREETINGS, GROUP! YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE IT SO EASY FOR PEOPLE TO DROP IN ON YA!
GOT NEWS FOR YOU, LOUDMOUTH: IT AINT THAT EASY!
WHA--? A PLEXI-GLASS CAGE! DROPPED FROM THE CEILING!
THIS GIZMO MAY KEEP OUT THE RIFF-RAFF, GRUESOME, BUT IT'S A JOKE TO ME!
THAT DEVICE COST US THOUSANDS! IF YOU WRECK IT...
DON'T WORRY, RUBBER-FACE! THIS SQUIRT'S GONNA BE TAUGHT SOME MANNERS RIGHT NOW!
OWW! YA BIG APE-- WHO DO YA THINK YOU'RE PUSHIN' AROUND?
DON'T FORGET YOU'RE MESSIN' WITH A GUY WHO HAS THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER!
NUTS! THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR PULLING MY PUNCH ON ACCOUNTA HIS SIZE!
OKAY, WISE GUY! YOU WANNA PLAY IN THE BIG LEAGUE? I'LL GIVE YA A LITTLE SAMPLE OF WHAT TO EXPECT!
SO YOU GOT THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER, HUH? EVER SEE AN INSECT THAT COULD PULL A STUNT LIKE THIS??
MAYBE NOT...
BUT I'VE GOT STUNTS OF MY OWN-- LIKE STICKIN' TO THE WALL TO DODGE YOUR CLUMSY ATTEMPTS TO TRAP ME!
2


CLUMSY, HUH? WHY, YOU--!!!
HEY! TAKE IT EASY! THESE SUPERHERO UNIFORMS DON'T COME CHEAP!
BY THE WAY, OL' BASHFUL BUDDY, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN ELECTRIFIED WEB?
IT'S A LITTLE SOMETHING I COOKED UP FOR GAY, CAREFREE MOMENTS LIKE THIS!
ARE YOU SURE YOU AINT ONE OF THE YANCY STREET GANG??
YEOW!!
THERE! PLAY WITH THAT FOR A WHILE! NOT ENOUGH CURRENT TO INJURE YOU, BUT ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU OUT OF MY HAIR FOR A FEW MINUTES!
NOW HOLD IT, SON! WE DON'T WANT TO FIGHT ANY STRANGERS--AT LEAST, NOT TILL WE KNOW WHAT WE'RE FIGHTING ABOUT!
WHO'S FIGHTIN'? JUST CONSIDER THIS A LITTLE EXHIBITION!
HE CAUGHT MY HAND IN THAT WEB OF HIS! HE CERTAINLY DOES LIVE UP TO HIS NAME!
BUT IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A WEB TO HOLD MR. FANTASTIC!
BRO-THER! IF I HAD A NICKEL FOR EVERY TIME THAT LINE'S BEEN USED BEFORE !!!
ALL RIGHT, MY FRESH FRIEND! LET'S SEE IF WE CAN KNOCK SOME OF THE INSOLENCE OUT OF YOU!
MAN! YOU COME ON LIKE GANG-BUSTERS!
3

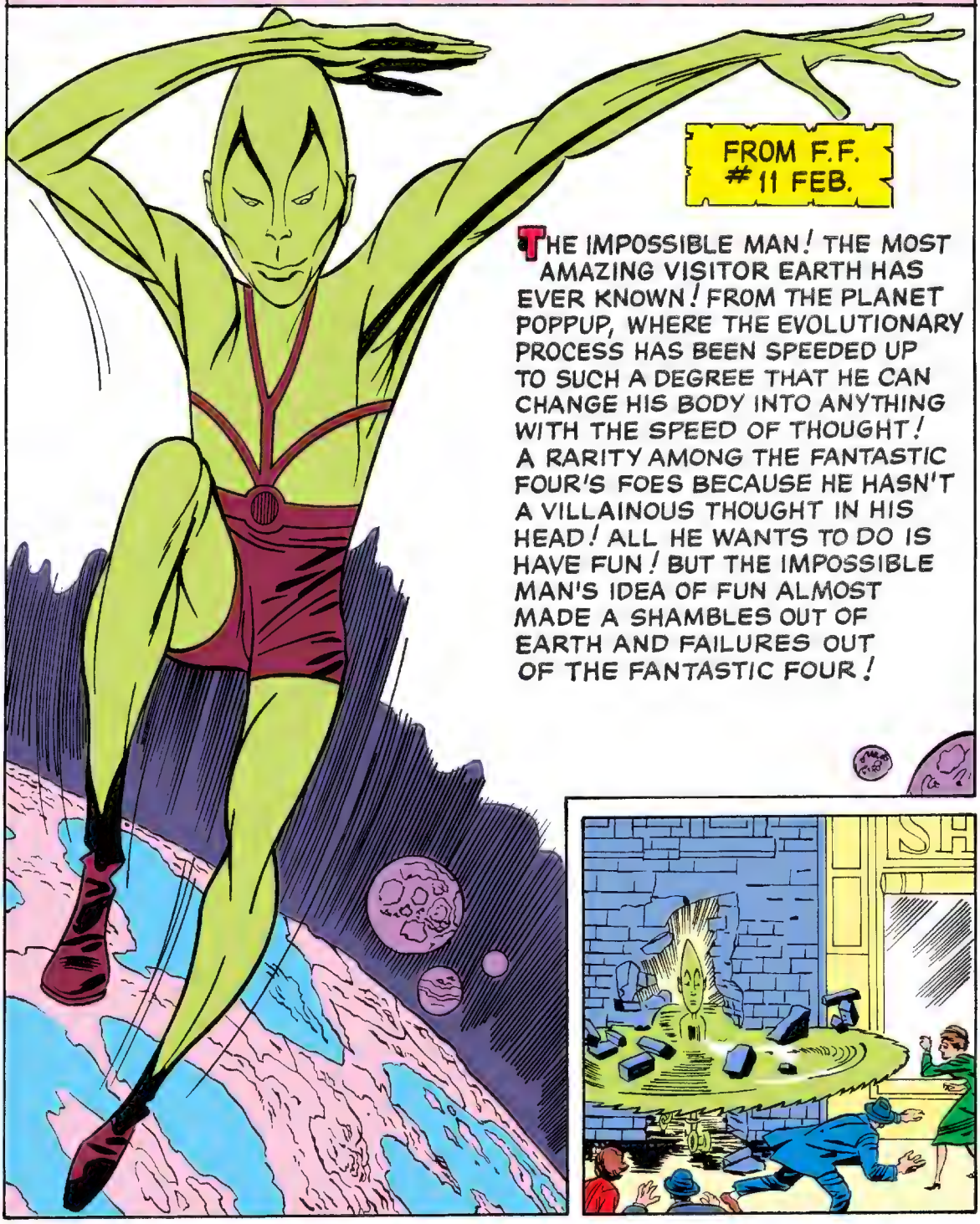

LAST STOP, PAL! EVEN A HUMAN STEAMROLLER CAN'T GET THRU A SOLIDIFIED WEB PILLAR!
KNOW SOMETHING? I'VE DECIDED THAT WHAT YOU NEED IS A GOOD PADDLING!
EASIER SAID THAN DONE, DADDY-O! YOU'VE GOT TO CATCH ME FIRST!
AND NOW, I'VE DECIDED JUST WHAT YOU NEED--
EVER TRY TO WIGGLE OUT OF A WEB MADE WITH SUPER-GLUE?? THIS'LL QUIET YOU DOWN FOR A WHILE, CHUM!
WHILE INVISIBLE, I'LL TRY TO GET THIS ROPE OVER OUR IMPETUOUS YOUNG FRIEND!
MY SPIDER INSTINCT SENSES DANGER BEHIND ME! HAVE TO MOVE FAST!
WHO TOSSED THE ROPE? DON'T SEE ANYONE!
MUST BE THE INVISIBLE GIRL! WELL, I'LL GIVE HER A SPIN FOR HER MONEY!
HIS REFLEXES ARE AMAZING! I'D BETTER TRY OUR BUILT-IN STUN-GUN, WHICH REED DEVELOPED TO STOP INTRUDERS!
BETTER COOL OFF NOW, SPIDER-MAN! WHILE THIS GUN WON'T INJURE YOU, IT'LL MAKE YOU THINK YOU'VE BEEN KICKED BY A MULE!
LADY, YOU'RE NOT TALKIN' TO ONE OF THOSE CORN-BALL VILLAINS YOU'RE ALWAYS FIGHTING!
CLICK!
I CAN STAY HERE NICE AND COZY BEHIND MY SOLIDIFIED WEB AS LONG AS I HAVE TO! GOT ANY MORE TRICKS UP YOUR SLEEVE??
4


I CERTAINLY HAVE! LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO AGAINST THIS WIND-TUNNEL FAN OF REED'S!
HEY! TAKE IT EASY! A THING LIKE THIS COULD MAKE A FELLA SNEEZE!
THANKS, GIRLIE--THAT REALLY REFRESHED ME! BUT NOW, IT'S GETTIN' LATE, SO I'LL JUST LET MY WEB TRAIL ALONG THE FLOOR TOWARDS THAT OVERGROWN PROPELLER, AND...
OH, DEAR! IT'LL TAKE A WEEK TO UNTANGLE THIS MESS!
YOU'VE ALL BEEN TOO GENTLE WITH HIM! NOW IT'S MY TURN!
THE PARTY'S OVER, YOU ANIMATED INSECT! I'LL SETTLE YOU NOW!
THE TORCH! HE'S GOT ME IN A CIRCLE OF FLAME!
WELL, I'LL JUST JUMP OVER THAT CLOWN'S LITTLE TRAP...
...AND KEEP OUTTA REACH TILL HIS FLAME DIES DOWN!
THEN IT'LL BE MY TURN!
HEY! STAY STILL, DARN IT!
HERE, YOU OVERSIZED JUMPIN' BEAN... IF YOU LIKE THAT CEILING SO MUCH, YOU CAN HAVE A HUNK OF IT--WITH MY COMPLIMENTS!
NOW TO SCARE HIM WITH A FEW LOW-INTENSITY FIRE-BOMBS BEFORE HE CAN THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE!


OH, NO! HE MADE A BAT OUTTA HIS WEB, AND HE'S HITTIN' THEM AWAY!
I CAN KEEP THIS UP AS LONG AS YOU CAN, JUNIOR! AND I GOT NEWS FOR YOU... YOU'RE A CRUMMY PITCHER!
HEY, SUE! DISCONNECT THAT ELECTRIFIED WEB, WILLYA, SO I CAN GET OUT OF HERE!
OH, SORRY, BEN! I WAS SO BUSY WATCHING, THAT I FORGOT!
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT! HERE, STRINGBEAN, I'LL SNAP THAT SUPER-GLUE STUFF OFF YOUR BONEY LITTLE WRISTS! AND NOW--
AND NOW NOTHING, BEN! IT'S TIME FOR ME TO PUT A STOP TO ALL THIS!
OKAY-- THAT'S IT! NO MORE FUN AND GAMES, FELLA! SOMEONE MIGHT GET HURT! NOW, SUPPOSE YOU TELL US WHAT YOU'RE HERE FOR?
GET OUTTA THE WAY, KILLJOY! GIMME ANOTHER CRACK AT 'IM!
IT'S ABOUT TIME SOMEONE ASKED ME!
I WANT TO JOIN THE FANTASTIC FOUR, SO I THOUGHT I'D GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT I CAN DO!
SO NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS... HOW MUCH DOES THE JOB PAY? I FIGURE I'M WORTH YOUR TOP SALARY!
I KNEW IT! THAT KOOK HAS ROCKS IN HIS HEAD!
AFRAID YOU MADE A MISTAKE, SPIDER-MAN! WE'RE A NON-PROFIT ORGANI-ZATION!
WE PAY NO SALARIES OR BONUSES! ANY PROFIT WE MAKE GOES INTO SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH!
YOU CAME TO THE WRONG PLACE, PAL! THIS ISN'T GENERAL MOTORS!
6
WE KEEP JUST ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY OUR EXPENSES! EVERY OTHER CENT GOES INTO DEVELOPING THE MOST EFFECTIVE SUPER-CRIME-FIGHTING APPARATUS WE CAN CREATE!
BESIDES, AREN'T YOU WANTED BY THE POLICE? THIS ISN'T "OUTLAWS ANONYMOUS"!
I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN! YOU'RE JUST LIKE ALL THE REST! READY TO BELIEVE THE WORST OF ANYONE!
OKAY, KEEP ME OUT OF YOUR GROUP! WHO NEEDS YOU? I'LL MAKE YOU GUYS LOOK LIKE PIKERS!
WAIT! COME BACK!
AND THAT IS THE REAL REASON SPIDER-MAN NEVER JOINED THE FANTASTIC FOUR!! BUT WILL THEY EVER MEET AGAIN? WE WOULDN'T BE AT ALL SURPRISED!!
The End

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

The IMPOSSIBLE MAN FROM THE PLANET POPPUP



FROM F.F. #11 FEB.

THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN! THE MOST AMAZING VISITOR EARTH HAS EVER KNOWN! FROM THE PLANET POPPUP, WHERE THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS HAS BEEN SPEEDED UP TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT HE CAN CHANGE HIS BODY INTO ANYTHING WITH THE SPEED OF THOUGHT! A RARITY AMONG THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S FOES BECAUSE HE HASN'T A VILLAINOUS THOUGHT IN HIS HEAD! ALL HE WANTS TO DO IS HAVE FUN! BUT THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN'S IDEA OF FUN ALMOST MADE A SHAMBLES OUT OF EARTH AND FAILURES OUT OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

FROM F.F. # 12 MAR.

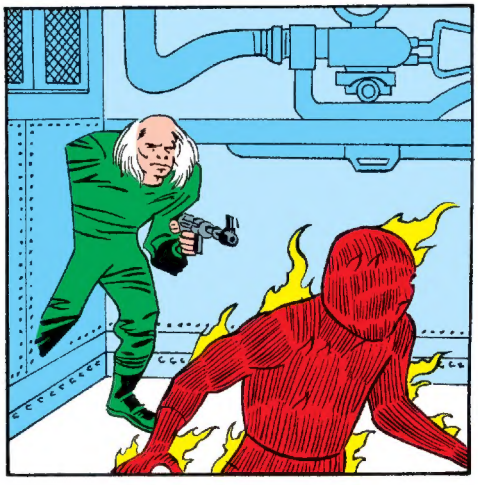
POSSIBLY THE MOST POWERFUL LIVING CREATURE TO WALK THE EARTH... THIS IS THE HULK! ONLY ONE OTHER PERSON KNOWS HIS WELL-GUARDED SECRET... THE FACT THAT HE IS ACTUALLY DR. BRUCE BANNER, A SCIENTIST ALMOST AS FAMOUS AS REED RICHARDS HIMSELF! BUT, WHEN HE STEPS IN FRONT OF HIS UNIQUE GAMMA-RAY MACHINE, THE RESPECTED DR. BANNER BECOMES THE RAGING, UNCONTROLLABLE, RAMPAGING MOUNTAIN OF MUSCLE... THE INCREDIBLE HULK! FANS STILL TALK OF THE EPIC BATTLE BETWEEN THE HULK AND THE THING... AND WONDER IF THEY'LL EVER MEET AGAIN!

A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

THE RED GHOST AND HIS INDESCRIBABLE SUPER APES

FROM F.F. #13 APRIL

THE WARPED BRAIN OF THIS BROODING COMMUNIST SCIENTIST FIRST CONCEIVED THE IDEA OF MATCHING POWER FOR POWER WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR BY SUBJECTING HIMSELF AND HIS TRIO OF TRAINED APES TO THE SAME COSMIC RAYS FROM WHICH THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAD DERIVED THEIR POWER! AND THEN, LOCKED IN MORTAL COMBAT, THERE WITHIN THE LOST CITY OF THE MOON, BOTH TEAMS OF SUPER-POWERFUL FOES HAD THEIR SHOWDOWN BATTLE... WITH THE FATE OF EARTH HANGING IN THE PRECARIOUS BALANCE!

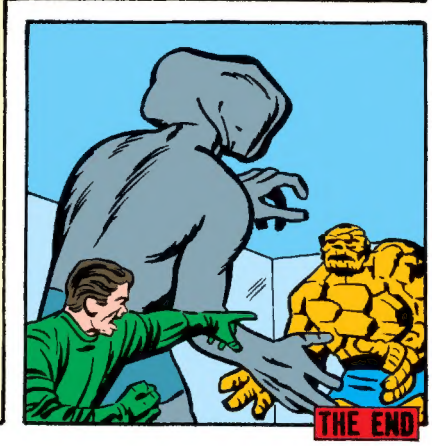


A GALLERY OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S MOST FAMOUS FOES!

THE MAD THINKER and his AWESOME ANDROID

FROM F. F. #15 JUNE

KNOWN TO MANKIND ONLY AS "*THE THINKER*", THIS STRANGE, MERCILESS VILLAIN HAD NO SUPER-POWERS OF HIS OWN, AND YET... WITH THE AID OF HIS BRILLIANT BRAIN, AND HIS BLINDLY-OBEDIENT ANDROID SLAVE, HE WAS THE FIRST ENEMY EVER TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S SKY-SCRAPER HEADQUARTERS AND TURN REED'S IN-VENTIONS AGAINST OUR HEROES!



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